



PLANS by the United Kingdom Atomic Energy Authority to build a clutch of reactors on Winfrith Heath, Dorset, were seriously endangered by a legal instrument of 1771 securing commoners' rights there and preserving the area as a source of "turf and other fuells." However, it is now proposed to push a Bill through Parliament extinguishing these rights, and it is expected that a strong argument on the Government's side will be that the legal brains of 1771, in referring to "other fuells," had more or less been leaving a loophole for a clutch of atomic reactors.

#### Hard as A B C

THOUGH it is the normal practice in the Soviet Press, says an article in the *Sunday Times*, to list the members of



the Presidium alphabetically, "Zhukov is invariably given first place among the candidates even though his name begins with 'Z.' Small things like this count in the Soviet Union." Another small thing that counts is the order of letters in the Russian alphabet, in which Z comes eighth out of thirty-two; and still another, that Zhukov in Russian doesn't begin with Z anyway.

#### Whole Point

THAT the older generation doesn't understand the younger is a complaint timelessly on the lips of both, and one that received a fresh boost in Birmingham the other day when the chairman of a juvenile court, addressing lads who had rolled a twenty-gallon galvanized iron water tank down an embankment

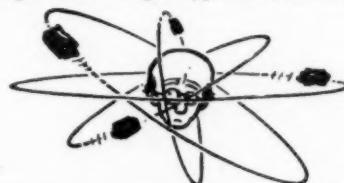
into the path of a main-line express, explained that "they might have caused a serious rail disaster."

#### Shrinkage

THE Chairman of the Royal Empire Society, originally the Royal Colonial Society, has felt the hot breath of events on his neck, and now announces that "the name Commonwealth will have to come into our title." Unless he is going to be stuck yet again with a lot of obsolete letter-headings he should act at once.

#### Mirror, Mirror on the Wall

STUDENTS of publicity practice and performance are much interested in a current collector's piece, a handsome advertisement by the National Coal Board which asks, in challenging titling, whether Britain's coal resources are adequate, and at once avers that they are. Illustrations include a power-loading machine, a huge lump of coal claimed to be an enlargement of a quarter-inch particle, and diagrams showing that of 263,000,000 tons of fuel used in 1956 coal provided 216,000,000. There is a good deal of informative text ("Expanding industry requires more and more coal"), some neat, informal touches ("Don't think of coal as lumps in a scuttle") and one or two highfown, slogan-type asseverations



("For you, your children and their children—*this is the age of opportunity in coal*"). Only the slow-witted will come to the easy conclusion, however, that the advertisement has absolutely no point. Its sting is in its subtle digs at the atomic energy industry . . .

"Make no mistake, we have sufficient coal below ground to meet our power requirements for centuries to come" . . . "Coal will not be replaced by other sources of power for many generations" . . . In short, the consumer is in for a feast of competitive advertising between coal and the atom which will make a pleasant change from that old war between the Gas and Electricity Boards and will give a sense of shape to the whole question of nationalized fuel by being just as silly.

#### Sure it wasn't Speidel?

No sooner had amateur strategists come to accept Alanbrooke as the true architect of victory, reducing Churchill to the ranks of mere political meddlers, than the official historian to the U.S.



Navy, speaking at Oxford, dismissed the pair of them and awarded the glorious biscuit to General Marshall. No doubt, as further facts unfold, there will be even more startling selections, and the amateur strategist might as well give up worrying and join the blithe masses in nominating Mr. Errol Flynn.

#### Intolerable

A MOVE by the American motor industry to introduce a four-day working week is causing serious alarm among trade unionists on this side. If the idea spreads, where are they going to find time to hold the routine strike meetings?

#### Frozen Asset?

ONE of the provisions reported to govern the release of Prince Philip's television programme to American

companies is an assurance that it would "in no way be associated with advertisements." Leader writers who have been saying that it will do more to advertise Britain than the H-bomb tests are now expected to climb down.

### Win This Grand Guided Missile

POSSIBLY the most alarming addition to the impressive list of newspaper



give-aways is an "easy-to-fly" aeroplane. This is probably the last inventive fling of competition editors, and will also serve as an excuse to slump back at last on that old reliable, the free life insurance policy.

### Rattling Season

WHAT was behind Donald Maclean's surprise visit to the Opera House in Moscow, and his hasty, "almost running" exit during the final applause? Speculation so far seems to have been wide of the mark. It seems almost certain that Maclean, who for six years had resolutely avoided all public appearances, was drawn irresistibly to the concert by the wizardry of Sir Malcolm Sargent, making his way there in a hypnotic trance of a kind unknown in musical circles since the famous affair at Hamelin, and realizing only in the nick of time that he was about to be lured into a mountain cave and the arms of retribution. M.I.5 is to be congratulated on the inventiveness of the plan, despite its failure. In future Special Branch men disguised as ushers at Sargent concerts must act earlier; the louder passages of the work before the interval should be ideal for the unobtrusive removal of a varied bag of glassy-eyed third secretaries, vanished diplomats, air attachés and renegade atomic scientists.

### Serenade for Strings

ALTHOUGH we're told what strings are planned

When engineering pay goes up, it's important, too, to know whose hand holds them, and so controls the puppets.

## INSIDE JOHN GUNTHER

JOHN Gunther, like all contemporary problems, must be considered as a whole. It is no good trying to isolate individual features. The nose, for example, slightly over one and three-quarter inches from tip to brow, is of no special significance when detached from the brown-complexioned dolichocephalic\* face. The hands, each of them equipped with five fingers, of which the centre one is the longest, can have no function apart from the arms to which they are attached by flexible wrists. Mr. Philip Donkin, whom I met on a No. 31 bus plying between Chelsea and Chalk Farm when I first planned my visit to John Gunther, and who earns twelve pounds a week as a plumber, told me "It's this essential unity of John Gunther's that prevents him from falling into his constituent parts." I asked him if he could think of any reason that could account for this. "No, I can't," he told me.

Americans. He is a Bachelor of Philosophy of the University of Chicago, a city of more than three and a half million inhabitants, but lives in East 62nd Street, New York.

He speaks English, though, with a noticeable American intonation and a frequent use of American idioms. Most of the anecdotes about him have to do with his habit of penetrating inside vast tracts of territory. A friend called on him soon after he published *Inside Europe* in 1936. "Are you going inside any place else?" he asked. "Sure," said John Gunther.

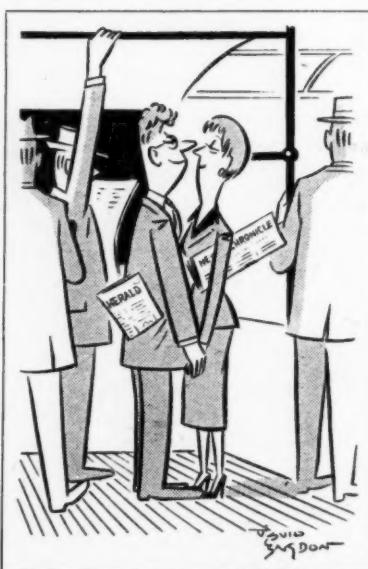
\* \* \* \* \*  
Here are some random facts about John Gunther:

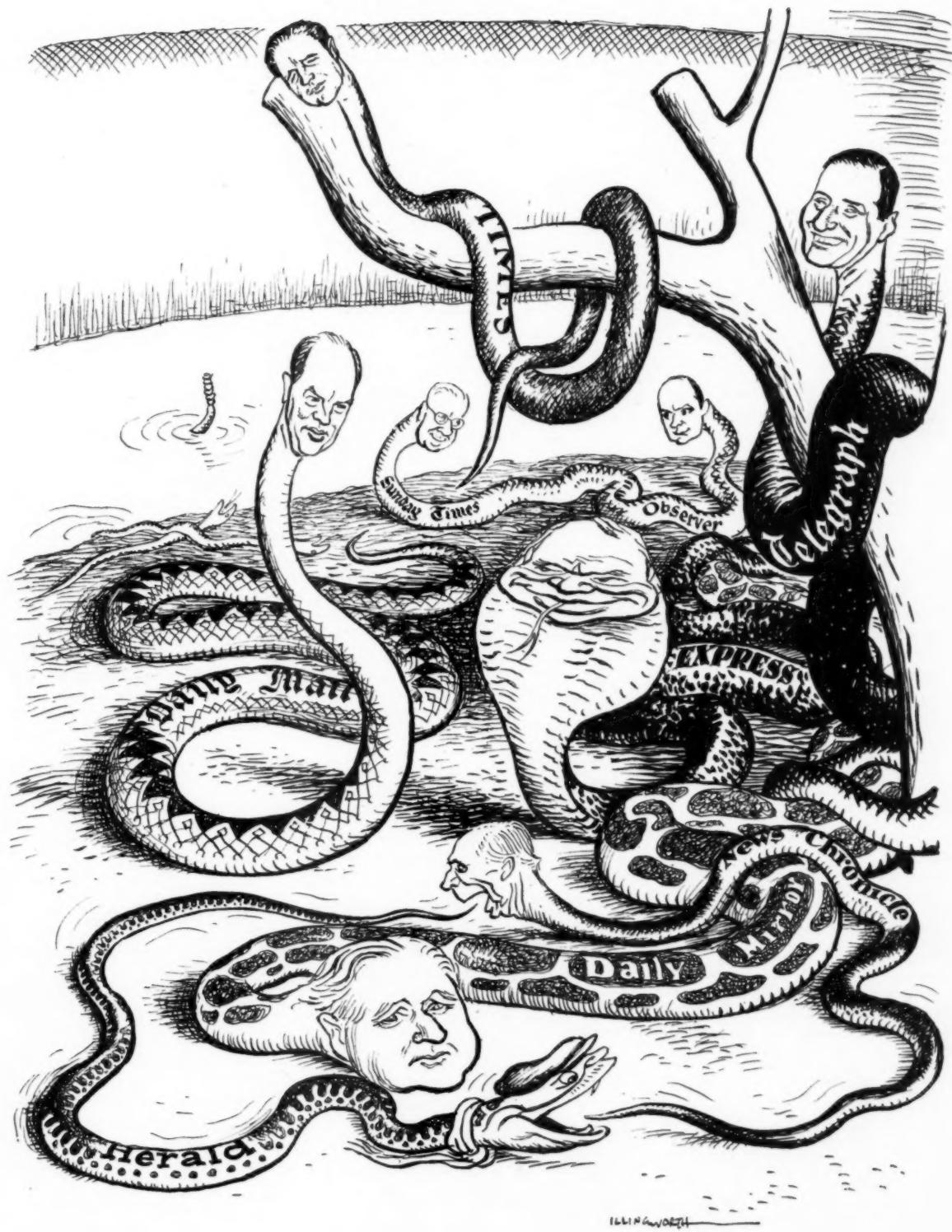
He never eats anything except food. This he takes in through his mouth, by means of a knife and fork, or sometimes a spoon, which he uses to lift the food from the circular plates of earthenware on which it is served. He is six feet in height, give or take a few inches, and has published sixteen books, six of which contain the word "inside" in the title. (This includes *Inside Russia*, which is still in preparation.) He has been twice married, and claims that during his journey through, or rather inside, Africa, he took notes on conversations with 1,503 different people. (It seems more.)

Almost all his possessions have been obtained by the expenditure of money. Some, on the other hand, he has been given, either by friends or by others less intimate. The money, the greater part of which is kept in a bank, comes chiefly from the profits on his books and is almost entirely in American dollars except for such sums as are required for his constant travels abroad.

\* \* \* \* \*  
Where will this extraordinary career finish? Discounting the Arctic and the Antarctic, nothing seems to be left to John Gunther except *Inside Canada*, with its many exciting potentialities, and *Inside Australasia*. Australasia includes such fascinating territories as Pitcairn Island, where the survivors of the mutiny on the *Bounty* settled, and Easter Island, known for the gigantic sculptures carved by a former civilization of which under the present British rule no slightest trace remains.

B. A. Y.





THE FREEDOM OF THE PRESS

## The Klan Kourier

*A weekly bulletin issued from the Den of the High Dragon for the guidance and information of members of the British Ku-Klux-Klan.*

**H**EARTY congrats to D. Pitterwith, Burslem, who has been promoted to the rank of temporary acting Klokard for his organization of the recent sale of work! The sum raised exceeded expectations, and will be placed in the Annual Outing Fund. Keep it up, Pitterwith!

Many Klansmen still seem to be uncertain as to whom they should disapprove of. For their guidance, Secret Rule No. 4 is reprinted here:

4. I promise to take strong objection to small Roman Catholic negro communists of Jewish persuasion. Failing that, I will heartily dislike middle-aged men in brown suits born on a Thursday.

Supplies of the super quality hoods and nightgowns are now coming through.

*This Kourier is Confidential, and must not be allowed to fall into the hands of any unauthorized person.*

These, fashionably cut in a hard-wearing woollen material, are considerably lighter in weight than the ordinary two-guinea model, and are eminently suitable for Klansmen in the higher income brackets. The eye-slits are fully reinforced with buttonhole stitch, and the cords are of pure silk. At eight pounds (including strong fibre carrying-case for those who want to change at the office) this outfit is indispensable for the Klansman who likes to *stand out* in processions, preserving even while incognito the indefinable stamp of breeding. If you want your section leader to

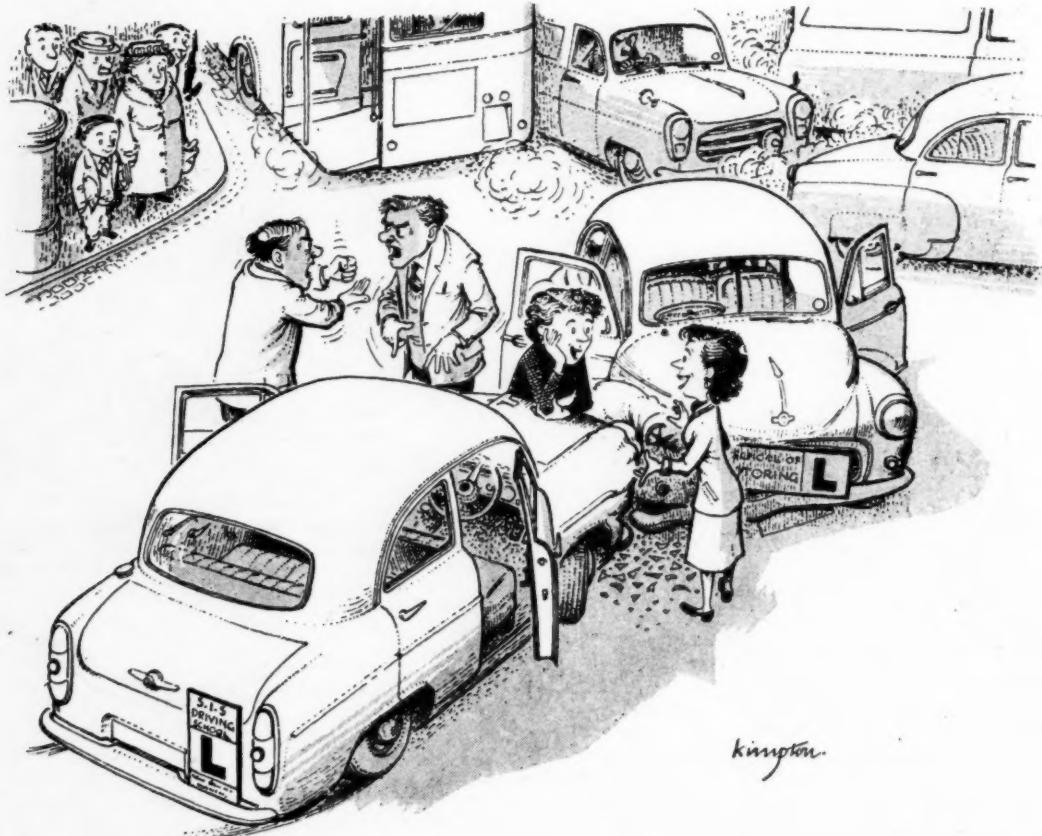
pick you out for rapid promotion, order now!

F. Duddestone, a Kavalier Second Klass attached to the Muswell Hill Kleagle, is to stand for Parliament as a Ku-Klux Independent in a coming Surrey by-election. He has kindly sent along one of his campaign leaflets. Here is a stirring extract:

VOTERS! Unite against Tyranny! Why should West Indians come here in their Tens of Millions and Take the Bread out of the Mouths of Old Age Pensioners?

**VOTE for DUDDESTONE AND SET YOUR COUNTRY FREE!**

This year's annual outing will be to Stonehenge on August Bank Holiday Monday. Klansmen are expected to bring their own sandwiches, and



Mrs. B. Wether has kindly agreed to make the tea. The following tentative programme has been drawn up:

11.30 a.m. Arrive. Roll call. Elevenses. Hymn.

11.50 a.m. Informal discussion—"Can Brown Bread be Safe?"

1 p.m. Lunch.

2 p.m. Open-air performance of *Are You a Mason?* by the North Birmingham Kleagle Thespians.

4 p.m. Lecture on the history of race riots, by the Exalted Grand Dragon.

5 p.m. Tea. Morris dancing. Tug-o'-war (Titans v. Cyclopses). Egg-and-spoon race (open event).

6.30 p.m. Oath-taking. Initiation of new members (in a bell-tent).

7.30 to 8 p.m. Rest period.

8 p.m. Grand five-mile march with fiery crosses, led by the massed bands of the Kubs and Brownies. A trade-unionist will be treacled and feathered, if available. Hoods will be worn. Silver collection.

10 p.m. Sick parade. Cocoa. Camp fire sing-song. Address by visiting Chief-Kludd Alfred V. Wellbeater of Alabama (with slides) on "How to Deal with Passive Resistance, or Would You Sit at the Back of the Bus?"

11 p.m. Pick up all litter. Hymn. Disperse.

There is still time to enter for our Grand Naming Contest! Which of the following titles do you regard as most appropriate for our organization, assuming that it will soon be properly registered as a going concern and given official recognition, like a Flag Day?

THE ROYAL KU-KLUX-KLAN OF GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND  
IMPERIAL HOLY ORDER OF THE  
KU-KLUX-KLAN  
U.K.K-K-K.

THE MOST NOBLE AND ANCIENT  
COMPANY OF THE KU-KLUX-  
KLAN (BRITAIN) INC.

Hand your suggestion, on a plain sheet of paper, to your local Dragon. First prize is a Kiddy's Ku-Klux Romper Suit in white flannelette ("Just Like Dad!").

The Secret Password for next week will be:

"*Cucullus non facit monachum.*"

The response will be:

"Some of my best friends are Catholics."

Finally, some extracts from a fighting



speech made by Titan W. Lugg at a recent meeting in the Festival Hall. A large and enthusiastic audience (including statesmen, actresses, boxers, and members of the aristocracy) cheered him to the echo and good-humouredly pelted him with refuse.

... at no time do we plan to kick West Indians. We are British (*Hear, hear*), and we have our sporting instincts, we are glad to say . . . After all, this is a free country: otherwise we couldn't have started the thing at all. What's the good of freedom if you don't use it? . . . We have lagged too far behind the United States. It was the same with tinned fish. (*Hear, hear*.) They've had the Klan since 1865—and what have we had? (*A voice*: "The B.U.F.!") Exactly! And a lot of good *that* turned out to be! But there's a new feeling abroad to-day. Our white Christian right-wing youth seeks a way of asserting its superiority.

We have the anger: all we want is something definite to spit on. (*Loud laughter*.) Tennessee gave us the lead. The Union of South Africa was quick to follow. Hitler did his best. Now it's up to us! Give us our hoods and nighties, and we'll save old England yet! (*Uproar*) . . . At last we are on the march! The lion's tail has been twisted for too long! At last, at long last, we British are doing something that our children will never forget! (*Loud and prolonged confusion*.)

ALEX ATKINSON



"Charles Wheeler, P.R.A., read the Lesson: 'Now we see through a glass darkly.' He pronounced glass in the Curzonian way to rhyme with cash, giving that worn quotation a new and distinguished appearance."

*Peterborough, Daily Telegraph*

And not a very sober one, either.

# America Day by Day

By P. G. WODEHOUSE

**C**ONSIDERABLE anxiety is being caused just now in many quarters of America by the new trend which is creeping into the Presidential Press conferences, if creeping is what trends do. Until recently it was all simple and straightforward. The gentlemen of the Press sat around and asked Mr. Eisenhower questions, and he answered them, and everything was fine. But now that these conferences are televised it has become the custom to switch the camera off the President and train it on the reporter as he speaks, and getting into the act like this is bringing out all the ham in the young fellows. As nice a bunch of modest, unassuming chaps as you could wish to meet they used to be, but to-day you find them out in the corridors peering into pocket mirrors and practising the quick, keen glance and the quiet smile with which they hope to slay their public. They call each other "Laddie" and ask friends if they caught them on the screen last Friday when they jumped in and saved the show.

Pretty soon they will be expecting awards, for, as Mr. Walter Kerr of the *Herald-Tribune* was saying the other day, we are reaching the point where everybody who hasn't actually fallen off the stage during performance is sure to

get an award from somebody or other. Competition for Most Photogenic Reporter of 1957 will be fierce, and there is the danger that editors will send to Washington as their representative some incompetent novice, because he looks like Gregory Peck, instead of the veteran who really knows his job but has a left profile that photographs badly.

Talking of television, one of its great scourges in America is the practice of the men behind the programmes of inflicting movies of the 1930 vintage on the public as the night wears on. (Known as the Late, Late Late, Late Late Late and Still Later shows.) Some genius has now invented a game which takes all the venom out of these and makes it a treat to watch them. I don't know if it has a name, but it could be called Spotting the Cliché. You score points for each moth-eaten old phrase you identify. Thus:

"All our lives we'll be hidin', afraid of every shadow." (2 pts.)  
 "We have ways of makin' people talk." (3 pts.)  
 "You dirty doublecrossing rat." (5 pts.)  
 "No, darling, I've got to do this my way—alone." (7 pts.)  
 "I never want to see you again as long as I live." (10 pts.)

You can play it by yourself or it can be played competitively for prizes.

A rather interesting story comes from Toledo, Ohio, where Cyril Murphy (8) was haled before the awful majesty of justice in the Juvenile Court accused of having tried to snitch a can of fruit juice from a parked delivery truck. He admitted the charge, but pleaded in extenuation that he had been egged on to his crime by the Devil. The Devil, it appears, got into conversation with him at a street corner and learning that Cyril was thirsty, for the day was warm, suggested that this thirst might be corrected by a good swig of fruit juice, which, he went on to point out, could be obtained from that parked delivery truck over there. Juvenile Court Referee E. Wade McBride advised him next time to make contact with an angel.

Cyril described the Devil as "all covered with hair, big balls of fire in his eyes, three horns, a long tail and

four hooved feet like a cow," and the theory in New York theatrical circles is that what he met must have been a dramatic critic.

There is a cigarette over here which is widely advertised as "tasting good like a cigarette should," and purists, armed with their Fowlers, are protesting strongly that this ain't grammar. No doubt they are right, but it has been rather shrewdly pointed out in one of the daily papers that a nation which objects to "like" as a conjunction and tolerates disc jockeys who say things of the order of:

"Give a listen, cats. Comin' your way Patchmo Faddle's 'How about it, baby?'. He's really rockin'. There just ain't nobody blows that horn like Patchmo does. Leave us listen."

is surely straining at a gnat and swallowing a camel.

It is a little late to be touching on inter-University football, but I think this little anecdote ought to read good like an anecdote should. A college which we will call Wabash was about to play a powerful rival, and the Wabash coach, a Mr. McGinty, felt that what was needed to put his team on their toes was an appeal to their emotions. So in his pep talk before the game started he spoke to them about his poor old father. His poor old father, he said, was very, very ill. The doctors held out little hope of recovery, but he, Mr. McGinty, was pretty sure that a thumping victory for the home side would do the trick. Father would be watching the struggle on his television set—he had just enough strength to twiddle the knob—so you must go out there, boys, and fight . . . fight . . . fight for dear old Wabash and Father.

The game was played, and the final score was Visitors 59, Wabash nil.

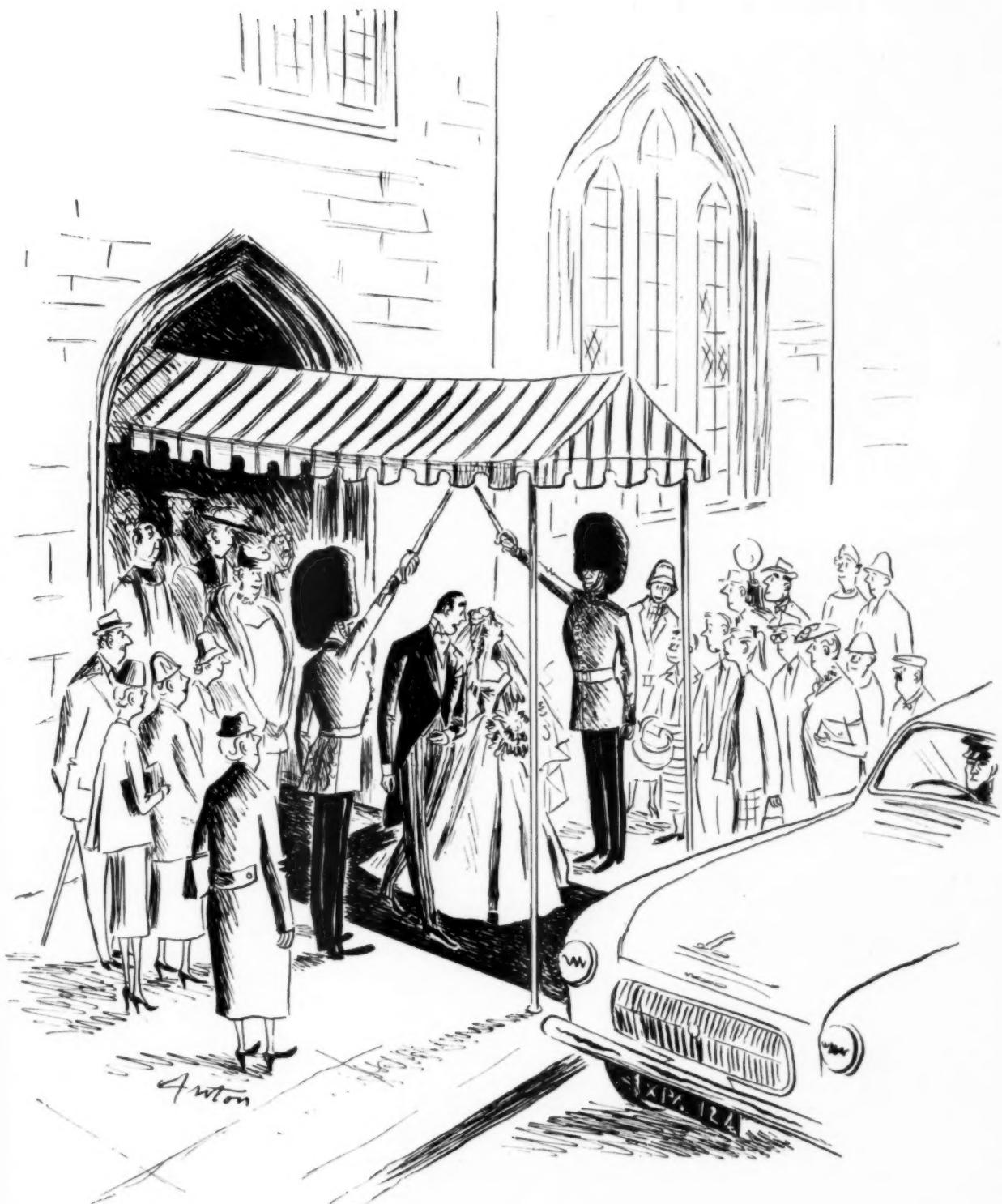
"We certainly finished off McGinty's old man, didn't we?" was the comment of one of the losing team to another in the dressing-room.

Sign over the door of a small grocery shop out Chicago way:

*This is a non-profit organization.*  
 To which is added:  
*We didn't plan it that way.*



"Amazing! After twenty years you still go to my head like wine."



"Blame Sandys."

# Undertones of Peace

By J. B. BOOTHROYD

THE tour of British Army units by fashion queens of the Douglas-Craig Mannequin Agency and School of Modelling (led by Miss Dorothy Reid, even better known as Miss Edinburgh of 1952) is still on, so it is too early to expect any official communiqués. All we have so far is the War Office's preliminary announcement; and just about now, it appears from that, the travelling seraglio should be somewhere in the Salisbury area, where, as it happens, the Guided Weapons Wing of the School of Artillery has been

showing a model of its own, the five-ton rocket modestly ranked as Corporal.

Pending a further Whitehall release there is no information on just how many fashion-conscious W.R.A.C. personnel are on the strength there, but the Corporal is rich in supplementary equipment—mobile cranes, articulated trucks, servicing platforms, firing devices and electronic computers, to name several—so there must be liberal openings for pretty ancillaries, if only brewing tea and dabbing iodine on trapped fingers.

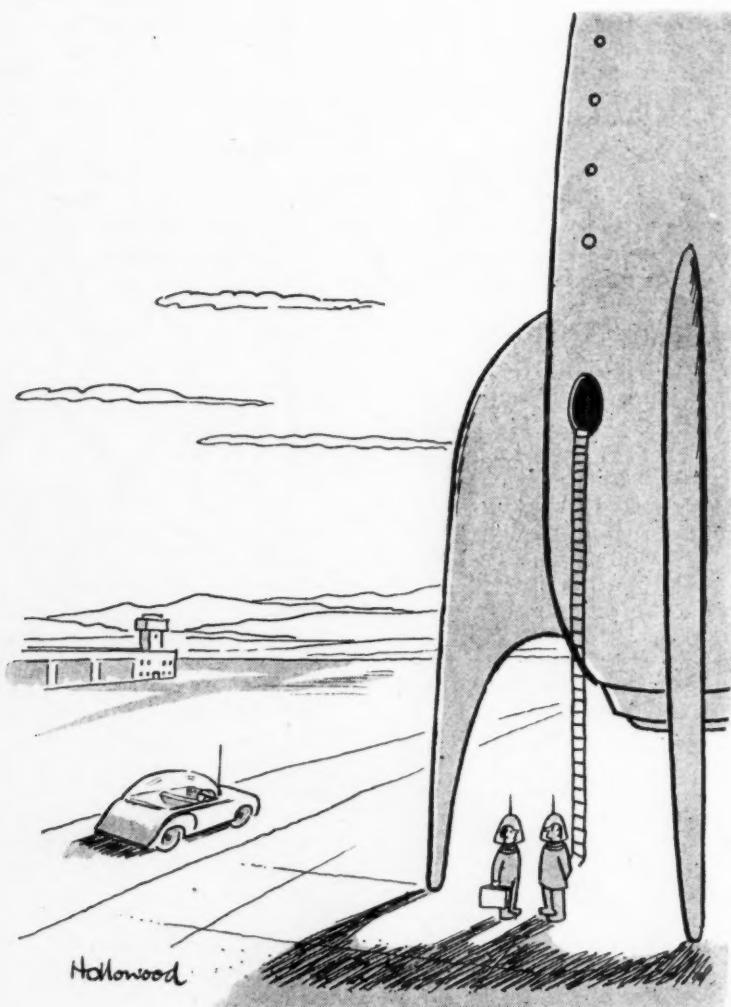
The C.O., it seems more than likely, was taken by surprise when the beauty box-car rolled up outside headquarters building. A man preoccupied with the launching (figuratively, for now) of a single salvo equal to the whole pre-Alamein barrage expects an occasional spot check from General Norstadt, Sir William Penney or Mr. Aubrey Jones; what he doesn't expect is Miss Edinburgh of 1952, with three striking mannequins and "the latest fashions from beach wear to evening gowns."

"With *what*?" he asked the Adjutant, who had entered flushed and without knocking. "Just a minute, though. I seem to remember something." The C.O. thrust his arm elbow-deep into a mound of atomic formulae, electronic computations, rejected indents for nuclear warheads, and invitations to local Civil Defence rallies. "Here we are. 'Fashion Tour to QARANC/WRAC Units.' Damn it, Benson, how are we supposed to keep on an early warning footing with this sort of thing going on?"

The difficulty was where to stage it. The M.O. was lecturing on bone-cancer in the gymnasium. The padre had the main dining-hall for number three of "Sidelights on the Hereafter." Folding gantries and air compressors packed the transport sheds to bursting. Instructional films on "First Aid Under Fallout" were running in the cinema, and the W.R.A.C. rest-room had cookery demonstrations under the general heading "Simple De-radioactivation Methods with Soup."

It would have to be outside, the C.O. decided. It was a fine evening. The Corporal's big servicing platform, 13X, would do. "Get it out there, Benson, and shove some pot-plants along the front."

It wasn't what the Douglas-Craig Mannequin Agency and School of Modelling were used to. Owing to regulations laid down the Corporal's equipment had to be paraded entire or not at all; Battery-Sergeant-Major Granite's voice was soon heard. A servicing platform on the square also meant lorries and launchers, mobile cranes, folding gantries, articulated trucks, water tanks, air compressors, hooters, erectors, trailers, radar vans,



*"Don't we have to put our watches forward or backward or anything?"*

firing devices and computers. It was all so different from the familiar entrance through silken draperies and along the slender, soft-carpeted promenade. Luckily, hairy military hands were willing, nay, eager, to grip an ankle or knee as required and heave the elegant creatures over the gaps between truck and trailer, van and gantry, until they made safe landfall on the broad, splintery deck of 13X.

Though the setting sun played genially over the scene, touching with undiscriminating ray the Corporal's lofted tip and the pleats of a short evening organza, the strong lines of the high-pressure air container and the pirouetted flash of white bouclé, a keen evening breeze had nevertheless sprung up, whining through the radar aerials and rattling gudgeon-pins and loose lead sheeting. The voice of the *commère* was unequal to this natural hazard, and in the end it was B.S.M. Granite who found himself standing down-stage left making the announcements. He avoided the eyes of his crew, standing easy behind the starry-eyed ranks of W.R.A.C.s.

"Now get this one," bawled Granite, holding his fluttering notes at the Present Arms—"with tucked and folded cummerbund of matching green, the whole in an all-over design of tiny pink an' red flowers . . ." ". . . full-skirted princess-line, own bolero, note the sleeveless bodice cut very low in front . . . stop that shufflin' at the back, some of yew . . ."

The C.O., who had strolled up, thinking to clear his brain of fireballs, muzzle-velocities still quaintly so-called, and its now permanent coating of radioactive dust, felt somewhat mellowed by the scene. The graceful girls, later to be his guests in the Mess, the soldierly resourcefulness of the Battery-Sergeant-Major, the unsuspected gallantry of the Adjutant, thoughtfully posted as guard on the tanker of propellant behind which the models were changing . . . All prompted the reflection that perhaps the War Office had something after all. W.R.A.C personnel, he supposed, might just as well fight a nuclear war in durably pleated orange-and-green satinized cotton with boat necklines as in khaki tunics



and skirts. They were, he told himself, bracing his shoulders unconsciously, English fighting women, and worthy of something better than their scruffy-looking sisters under the command of Mr. Ben-Gurion or Marshal Zhukov.

## Those Old Second-hand Days

By MICHAEL CAMPBELL

TO leave synchro-mesh and all that for a moment, I have been remembering the time some years ago when interest in the older car was at boiling-point. Perhaps it still is: I quitted the market then. I did see that Mr. Mel Tormé, the American singer, advertised his old limousine and had débütantes on the phone all day. But he is Mel Tormé. In my time these pleasures were open to all.

It was an evening newspaper that gave me passing glory. I shared a flat at the time with Charles Mountpeace, who was permanently at home, nailing down every gambit in the women's story business. I think he was driven to it by the fact of his own name, because he was an excellent, sensible fellow and is now in a tobacco firm. Our temporary lodger, however, John Good, should have swapped names. He was a thin, silent youth, with glasses, of an inhumanly respectable appearance. Charles, who knew him at school, said

he had unsuspected gifts. I called him "Good," and listened in fury to him tossing all night on the creaking stretcher-bed in the sitting-room.

Anyhow, I put the thing in, gave the phone number of the flat, bought the lunch edition, read it with the pride of an artist, and returned to the office for the afternoon stint. An hour later the phone rang. "I'm inquiring about this car" "Oh yes?" "What's she like?" "Well, as I said, eight horse power, 1938 model." "What are you asking?" "Well, it's there. £150." "How's the condition?" "That's there too. Very good." "They're tricky, these models. Did you know that?" "No. I didn't." "You didn't?" "No. I didn't." "How long have you had her?" "Six months. I bought it for £250," I added with grim truth. "Why are you selling?" "Listen," I said, incensed, "if you don't want it, don't have it." "Now then, now then, keep your bloody 'air on, mate! How's your chassis?" "How's yours?" I retorted.

When this was over I phoned Charles—at once. "What the hell do you mean giving my office number? If it goes on ringing it'll be damned embarrassing when the boss comes back." "Listen," he said, his voice trembling, "there are six men in the street, and two more in the flat, and the phone has rung thirty-nine times." "How remarkable!" I said. "I won't give it again," he replied, "but it's your party and it's getting damn nasty. They've discovered the chassis is solid rust and I don't like the look of them." "That was quick," I said, "but why don't they go home?" "They seem to take it as a personal affront. You'd better get back fast. Perhaps John will think of something." "Are you mad?" I said, and together we crashed the phones down. I couldn't wait to get home.

It was in a quiet street, with trees. I first saw the knot of people on the pavement when I was a long way off. Coming nearer I counted eleven men and one woman. Astonishingly enough,

there was no car. The group looked most odd, representing all creeds and classes, uncomfortably united by this rather pathetic desire. The one woman was standing a little away, in silence, as if she shouldn't have come but couldn't bring herself to go. Something must have happened to change the temper of the mob: they were obviously keen. Charles was there. As he spoke they all turned and looked at me. "Mr. Good has taken the car for a run," he said. "Who?" I asked. "Mr. John Good," he said, giving me a peculiar look. "He was here first. He's very interested. He thinks your price most generous."

At that moment the small black box of a car came purring along, the incredible Good at the wheel. He stepped out before the silent crowd, looking about ten years older than I remembered. "Mr. Campbell?" he said. "I like her. I like her very much.

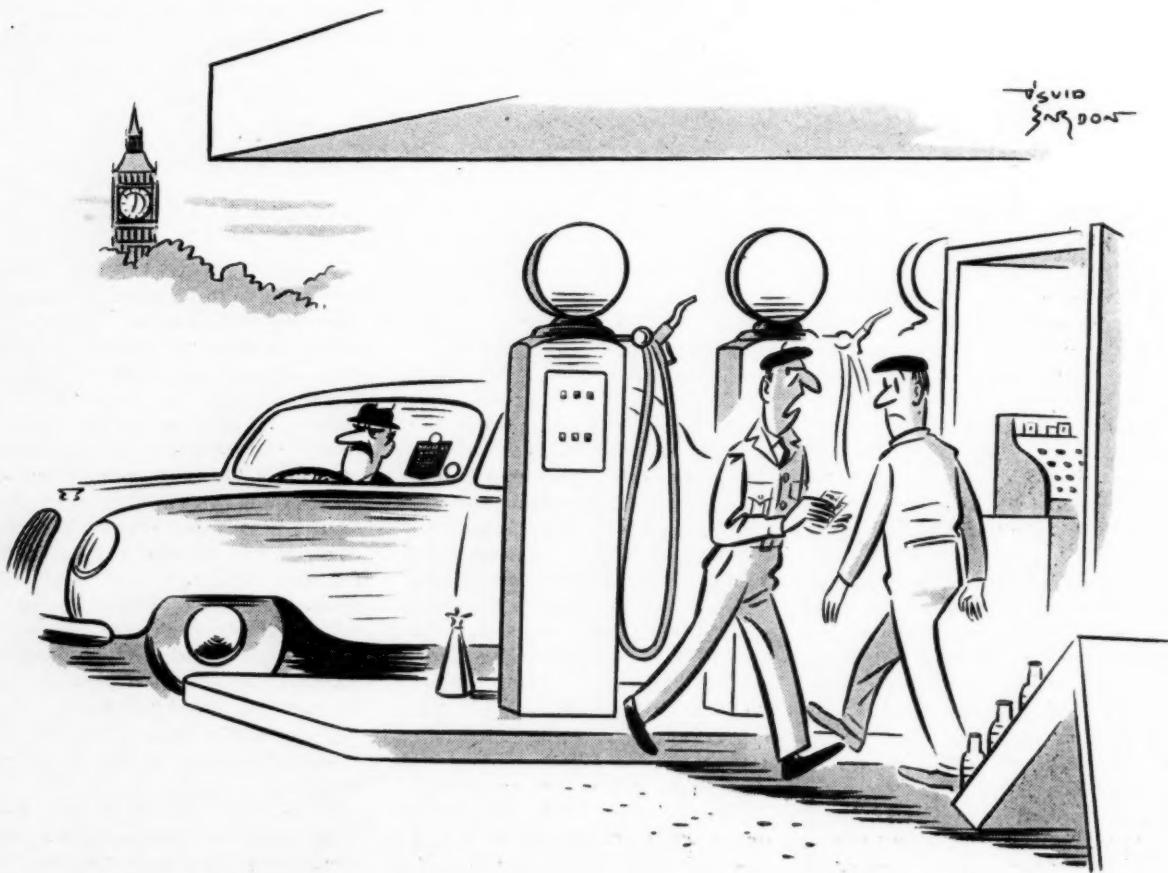
You're not asking enough, you know." It was so convincing that I only just stopped myself saying "But what about the rust, and all those bills . . . ?"

"When can you pay?" interjected a small dark man, with a pockmarked face. Good looked down at him with cool contempt. "Now. By cheque," he said. The small man put a hand on my shoulder. "Come 'ere a moment," he said, and he led me up the stairs, as if under his spell, and into the house. He went straight to the flat—he must have been there already—and threw open the sitting-room door. To my amazement I saw two men in overcoats seated on the sofa and a third in the armchair. He backed out again, saw the glass door of the bathroom and for some reason went there like an arrow. When I was inside he locked the door on us, and then inserted a small brown attaché-case, which I had not noticed before, neatly into the basin.

"Listen," he whispered. "That fellow Good. I know the type. He's an out-and-out spiv!" Tense though it was in the bathroom, I could scarcely restrain a smile. "Nonsense," I said. "Believe you me, sonny boy, a shark of the first order. I can tell 'em a mile off. That cheque will bounce—high. Look!" He flicked open the two catches of the case, lifted the lid, and revealed a solid block of pound notes. "A hundred and sixty," he said. "I'm raising you ten. That's the kind I am. Take it or leave it." "I'll take it," I said.

I put the pound notes in the bath. I got the men out of the sitting-room. The crowd in the street was persuaded to fade away. The car, thank God, started, and the owner drove off, his head only just appearing above the windscreen. The three of us stood there smiling.

"I'll sleep on the stretcher-bed to-night, John," I said.



*"One of those Suez rebels still insisting on using his coupons."*



## Hearts and Crafts

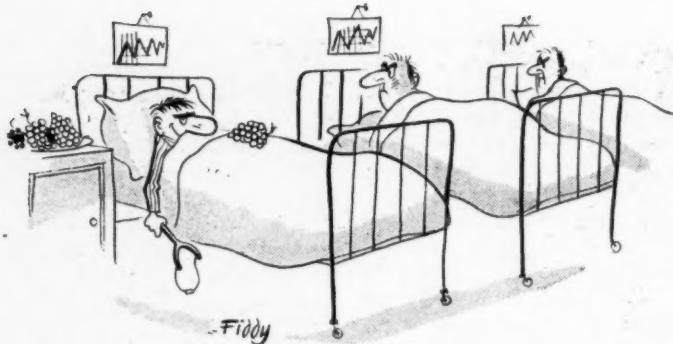
By ANTHONY CARSON

THE other day I found myself in Manchester, not at all by design. Manchester is a thick town, solid as a mahogany tea-chest, the people are square, even the dogs sniff around for money. There was a bit of a fog, and I went into an enormous pub like a bank and ordered a stout. Around me were women in head scarves and the flat talk of the Midland men like pennies dropping into a telephone box on a wet Sunday morning. I like talking to people in pubs, and I looked around for someone to discuss the weather with, or the atom bombs, or the women, and saw a tall, thin young man with a shock of red hair. By his side was a short fat man in a sort of doorman's uniform, and he seemed to be weeping with the drink or the fog or the pain at the heart of things or two of them together or all three. Or perhaps it was Manchester. I got talking to them and found the doorman was Irish and the man with the red hair English.

He was so English you could have found him somewhere in *The Times*, drinking tea on top of a shelf and reading Ruskin. "My name's Roger Eastwood," said the Englishman, "and I come from Hither Norbury." "I didn't know there were any English in Manchester," I said. "Nor Irish either," said the doorman. "Praised be God. Mr. Eastman here is a ruddy genius, as sure as my name is Paddy Malone." "A genius?" I repeated. "Certainly," said Paddy. "He's a musical fountain man, he plays the fountains like you was up in heaven with all the blessed saints." He wiped a tear from his eye. "I must get back to duty," he said and swayed out of the pub.

"How do you play the fountains?" I asked Eastwood. "It's the touch," he answered, "but Paddy exaggerates. He's a sort of disciple. Would you care to see them?" "Certainly," I said. We walked out of the pub towards the town hall, turned into a side street, and dived

into a basement and up an iron ladder. It was like the engine-room of a banana boat. We came to a smaller passage and into a chamber with a glass panel. Behind the glass panel, instead of electric eels or dugongs or flashing trout, was something like a toy railway. Underneath the panel were twelve or thirteen levers and light switches. "Would you like the Tales of Hoffman?" asked Roger, selecting a record and putting it on the turntable. Music poured into the aquarium, and Roger dived at the levers like a double-jointed organist. Water leaped from the pipes, mopped and mowed, pirouetted, needle and sprayed, danced and died. It was quite beautiful, virginal, moon-like. It was clever, too—a harmless clever dream. "I invented this water dance," said Roger. "I was given twenty-four hours to do it. Nobody could help because they didn't know who built the machinery. Twelve pounds ten all in, including meals, no beverages, and a



standby who plays the lute." "But who's watching all this?" I asked him. "People in a restaurant," said Roger. "Paddy's the doorman."

The next day I strolled round to the front of the restaurant. It was called M——'s, an ornate sort of place with enormous shrubs standing around in pots, swing doors, and a framed menu in the window. In French if you please. I swung through the doors and nearly bumped into Paddy. The tears were in his eyes again and he put his hand on my arm and pointed to the end of the restaurant where there was a sort of small platform dotted with hydrangeas, and from behind it the fountains were swirling and darting and dancing like girls in the year One. "Oh, it's a beautiful thing to behold," said Paddy, "and the way the great man teaches the water is greater than the Albert Hall itself." "It is beautiful," I agreed. And in a sense it was. The jets were spouting rhythmically to the music of "Galway Bay," and somehow, in quite a magical way, the water seemed to yearn and lean on your shoulder and weep like a drunken Irishman in Ladbroke Grove. "The Master is teaching me the way of it," said Paddy, "and one day I will make my own fountains in County Cork and be the talk of the nation." "How do the clients like it?" I asked. "Like it?" cried Paddy. "They never so much as look at the wonderful thing, it's not a quarter of a soul they have between them."

This was true. I went over to a long bar at the side of the restaurant and ordered a beer. "Only spirits, sir," said the barman, eyeing my dingy coat. "A gin," I said. Out of the corner of my eye I could see the water fantailing, and watched the other people. They

never so much as rolled an eye at the display, they turned their backs on it as though the water was an income-tax demand. They talked business, deals, mergers, debentures, and they stood as

## *Working Party*

WE met as we were told to meet,  
Devoted and apart,  
Our minds a mass of sober fact  
And zeal in every heart:  
But found our chances of success  
Uneven from the start.

We found the expert in the chair  
Whom most we had to fear,  
A man of a commanding mind,  
Meticulous and clear,  
But one whose solid qualities  
Did not at first appear.

He had a dark and furrowed brow  
And wasted cheek; he had  
An angular ascetic's frame  
Most maculately clad.  
Beneath his beetle brows his eyes  
Were simian and sad.

He looked a man who might have  
sailed  
To Suva in a sloop,  
Or gone on hunger-strike, or led  
An acrobatic troupe,  
Or started some exotic sect  
Or kerbside skiffle-group.

He talked continuously, slumped  
Recumbent in his place,  
With one bright, visionary eye  
Turned upwards into space.  
And agonies of eager thought  
Reflected in his face.

square as safes with their backs to the flowers of the fountains.

Before I left Manchester I called back at the pub and found Eastwood seated at a table with his head in his hands. "What's up?" I asked. "Everything's up," said Eastwood. "I'm going back to Hither Norbury." "Why?" I asked. "Paddy's at the fountains," he said. "What's wrong with that?" I asked. "Wrong!" cried Roger. "He's drunk as a lord. He's twisted the pipes round, turned the water on full strength and it's shooting all over the restaurant." "Did everyone run out?" "They can't," said Eastwood miserably. "He's locked all the doors." We were both silent, thinking.

"He did it all for the fountains really," murmured Eastwood, almost to himself.

The concept that his mind contained  
Was perfect and precise;  
He saw a sea of shifting fact  
As something neat and nice;  
And what he saw he first explained  
And then repeated twice.

He had a timelessness of thought  
Peculiarly his own,  
A soft, insistent turn of speech  
That seemed to make the moan  
Of doves in immemorial elms  
Sound strident in its tone.

At last he made a little joke,  
And turned his eye to meet  
Our eyes and, roguish and withdrawn,  
Smiled at his own conceit.  
His teeth were carious, his smile  
Was singularly sweet.

So much of speech in one induced  
Aphasia in the rest.  
We sat, and in the hush that fell  
He pushed aside his vest  
And scratched a patch of sable hairs  
On his emergent chest.

And so we left and, leaving, thought  
Of all the right replies  
We should have made: like one who  
wakes  
And, conscious-stricken, tries  
To think of all he meant to do  
Before he shut his eyes.

P. M. HUBBARD



## Before Edgbaston

IN 1912 three countries, England, Australia and South Africa, were contenders for the world cricket championship. England had just beaten Australia, South Africa had beaten England, and Australia had beaten South Africa, so the situation was remarkably fluid—rather like one of those cistern problems in General Certificate arithmetic. Partisans argued that if E. could swamp A., and A. could sink S.A., then E. was clearly tops. They also argued that if E. could submerge A., and S.A. could drain E. . . .

What happened was that a triangular tournament was held in England. Immense excitement, the Press (even then) in fine fettle. But the competition was a wretched failure. Australia sent a very poor and unrepresentative team, South Africa was weak, and England, captained by the great C. B. Fry, made the most of an atrocious summer. The curious may be interested in the results:

	Played	Won	Lost	Drawn
England	6	4	0	2
Australia	6	2	1	3
South Africa	6	0	5	1

I mention all this because as I see it the time is ripe for another world tournament. Since 1912 four more nations have achieved what is known as Test Match status and the cistern problem is more devilishly involved than ever. England has licked Australia in three successive Test series, Australia has trounced New Zealand, India and the West Indies, Pakistan has beaten Australia, the West Indies has not lost to England since the war. South Africa

has drawn with Australia and England. It would now tax the skill of a senior wrangler to place the contestants in a generally acceptable order of merit.

If this tournament could be held next winter—in India, say—I would back the West Indies to top the league. The Calypso Kids (the popular Press must take the blame for this topical turn of phrase) are at their best on hard wickets: their batting is infinitely stronger than that of England, Australia, South Africa (but the South Africans wouldn't



Eric Darnley Alfie Granville Garfield Sobers

play in India), Pakistan and New Zealand, and their bowling, though less penetrating than that of England and less nagging and stupefying than the Goddard-Tayfield partnership, is probably as reliable as any.

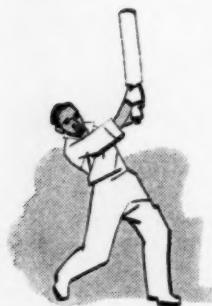
Students of *Wisden* will remind me that a weak Australian side trounced the West Indians in the Caribbean a year or so ago, but the weak Australian side included Miller and Lindwall and therefore had a fictitious but shattering air of invincibility. And now that the two dealers in thunderbolts have left the stage the Aussies' attack is more apt to whimper than bang.

Yes, I should tip Goddard's men—just as I tip them, provided that there is something resembling a hot summer, to win the series starting to-morrow.

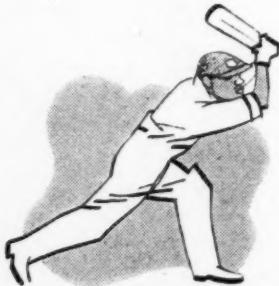
Some of them have been here before. Goddard captained the victorious team of 1950 (it lost at Manchester on a rubbish-heap and won the other three games of the series), led an over-confident invasion of Australia in 1951 and lost his magic touch, was dropped and became a has-been, and then, on the horses-for-courses principle, was suddenly and dramatically restored to favour. He bowls lengthy off-spinners, bats in imitation of Trevor Bailey, fields courageously and leads from the front in the tradition established by Maclaren and strengthened by Sellers of Yorkshire and Surridge of Surrey.

Goddard's second-in-command, Clyde Walcott, is now regarded by most critics as the finest batsman in the world. For a long time he was the junior partner in the notorious trio, the "W" formation of Weekes, Worrell and Walcott. In 1950, when he kept wicket, he told reporters that his reputation depended solely on the initial letter of his surname, that he was included in the trio for reasons of assonance and alliteration. He was, and is, a modest fellow, but his achievements during the last few years have made his humble disclaimers rather difficult to swallow. In the most recent rubbers, against India, England and Australia, he has scored 2,001 runs, with averages of 76.16, 87.25 and 82.7. Against Miller, Lindwall, Benaud and company he hit five centuries in ten innings, thus beating the record of Bradman, Sutcliffe, Compton, Hammond, Headley and Weekes. Twice in this series of 1954-55 he scored two hundreds in a match.

He began this summer, wearing three sweaters, with scores of 33, 58, 50, 29, 86 and 117, and it is a fearful fact that



Frank Worrell



Everton Weekes



Sonny Ramadhin

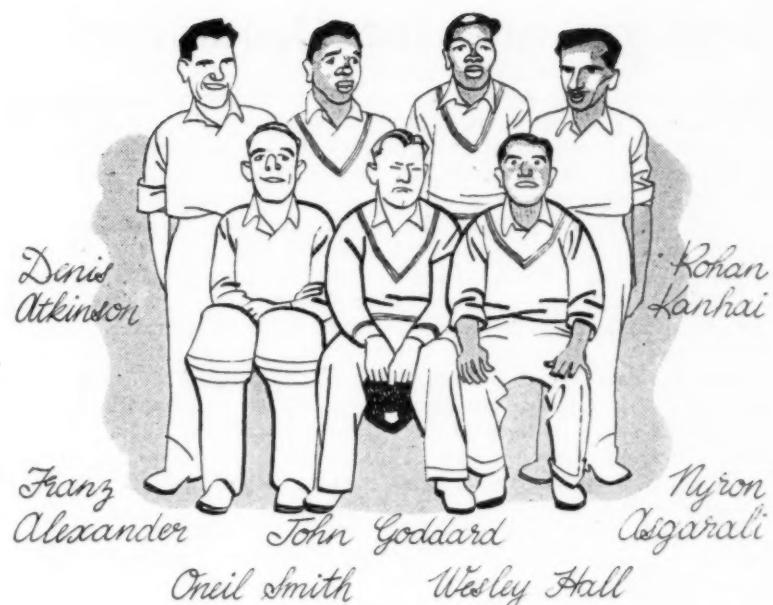
his prowess improves as he becomes less laminiferous.

The other "Ws" have also started well. Everton de Courcy Weekes of Barbados is acknowledged to be the most powerful and accurate short-arm hooker in the business. I have seen good-length balls whistle from his bat to the square-leg boundary like arrows: I once saw Graveney, on the fence and no more than five yards from the line of fire, turn to warn the spectators of the approaching missile.

Weekes once made five Test centuries in a row. In England, in 1950, he hit five double centuries.

Frank Worrell, the oldest member of the trio (some of the sporting columnists have been fooling themselves that at the ripe old ages of 31, 32 and 32 Walcott, Weekes and Worrell are approaching senility), is an all-rounder, a new-ball swing merchant and a batsman in the Woolley class as a driver of effortless grace. In the 1950 Tests he averaged nearly ninety. England's bowlers comfort themselves, I am told, with the news that Worrell will shortly be taking exams at Manchester University and may therefore have a somewhat larger blind spot than usual.

Ramadhin and Valentine (the Ram-dhin and Va-len-tine of the best of all calypsoes) have reached the age of twenty-seven and may also, with no possible justification, be said to be over the hill and on the way out. Ramadhin bowls medium-slow and turns the ball both ways—though not, as most English batsmen are apt to believe, simultaneously. Cricketers everywhere have their own peculiarly fallible methods of identifying this young Trinidadian's spin. Australians claim to spot the twisting of the seam while in flight; Indians pretend to recognize the music of the spheres; Englishmen, more



realistic, have been wont to attribute the unpredictable bend and their tumbled bails to minute irregularities in the pitch, lack of sight-screens, the bowler's buttoned shirt-sleeve, the imminence of lunch and poor umpiring.

Valentine bowls left-handed *à la* Verity.

Then there are the youngsters, Sobers and Smith. Sobers, a strange name for a highly volatile all-rounder, first played Test cricket at seventeen. Smith, known as "Collie," bowls off-spinners and bats like a well-tempered Jessop. It is enough that discerning critics have compared him with the youthful Constantine.

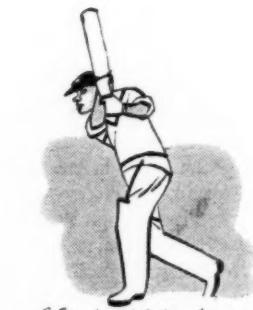
Atkinson, Dewdney, Asgarali, Alexander, Hall, Gilchrist, Kanhai, Ganteaume, Paireau . . . there is a pleasing cosmopolitan ring about these names, just as there is a wonderfully original and provocative ebullience in

the behaviour of their supporters. At Lord's during the M.C.C. game the darker spectators had a splendid time, barracking their heads off, applauding generously and, between overs, composing new verses to *the calypso tune* about everybody in sight.

I have an idea that this newly imported brand of spectatorship is exactly what the doctor ("W.G." of course) would order to put cricket back on its feet. A few thousand leather-throated enthusiasts and one or two smash-hit calypsoes would do more for the game than all the restrictive devices and statistical incentives engineered by the planners.

The series is obviously going to be a close thing. My guess is that Goddard's men will prove to be the stronger team and that the spectators will have plenty to shout about.

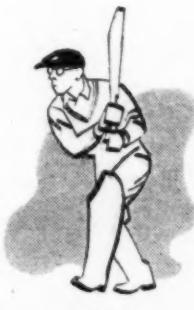
BERNARD HOLLOWOOD



Clyde Walcott



Alfred Valentine



Bruce Fairbairn

# Candidus and the Débutantes

ALL billowy and foamy in the snowiest white, the girls drifted and fluttered to their tables over the ballroom floor. Candidus gazed on them with rapturous surprise.

"These are your Virgins?" he inquired.

"The best of them. The best of all possible."

"And they are here for some kind of initiation rite?"

"Well, you could put it that way." This was, I explained, Queen Charlotte's Birthday Ball for the Débutantes. It initiated them into the mysteries of adult life, and the proceeds went to a maternity hospital.

"To which they will go when initiated?"

"Some day, some of them, doubtless." Candidus sighed a little. "The girls where I come from, they look not quite so virginal."

"And are they in fact?"

He gave me a shocked look. "Of course they are."

His roving eye now fixed itself upon another row of girls, drawn up in formation before the tables.

"Those lively little maidens in black," he remarked. "I like them even more. Their eyes are dancing in my direction. They are laughing. They are wearing pearls—and aprons. Why are they carrying shields? That is part of the ceremony?"

"Trays, not shields. They are the waitresses." Whereupon, with a

By LORD KINROSS

concerted clatter of crockery and clangor of trays, dinner was served. As we ate, Candidus studied the list of the girls.

"Bernstiel. Burges-Lumsden. Hanna. Hirsch. Laidlaw-Thomson. Runge. These are your great old English names?"

"Belinda. Gillian. Carolyn. Jennifer. Yes, there they all are."

"And the gentlemen? The ones wearing white carnations, they are Virgins too?"

"I have no idea."

Tossing manes of hair like well-bred fillies, chattering brightly around them like well-bred birds, the girls ate, then they danced, then a disembodied voice summoned the elect among them, one hundred and eighty Maids of Honour, to assemble for the initiation ceremony. The lights were dimmed, the floor was cleared, and the band struck up a slow, solemn incantation, to which the procession of girls, in formation of fours, wound down from the balcony and across the parquet towards two stately ladies, commanding as sibyls and regal in diamond tiaras. Behind them the girls dragged a great wheeled cake, alight and priapic with candles and surmounted with a pyre of flame.

Candidus whispered: "These are ancient rites. Pre-Christian, perhaps Mithraic?"

"No. They were invented by the hospital's Public Relations man in the nineteen-thirties. The same sort of thing happened on Queen Charlotte's birthday."

Candidus looked at me knowingly. "I happen to be versed in such observances. Have you read a book called *The Golden Bough*? They survive from the mists of a pagan folklore. That stately lady, she is the embodiment of the goddess Vesta."

"No. She is the Dowager Lady Howard de Walden."

Candidus paid no attention. "And these are her vestal virgins, who have taken vows of chastity; and that, on top of the cake, is the sacred fire of her Hearth, which is never extinguished. Who is the High Priestess next to her?"

"She is the wife of a former Prime Minister. Lady Churchill is her name."

Lady Churchill was now presented with a long, gleaming knife. She held



"I suppose we're lucky to have a roof over our heads."

this in her hand, running a finger along the blade, while she surveyed the girls with a Sibylline smile. Candidus cried out with horror.

"There is to be a human sacrifice?"

"I think not. The knife is for cutting the cake."

"Ah, yes. The cake of fruitfulness. The symbol of birth. These then are fertility, not chastity, rites."

The girls now formed into a magic semi-circle, then lowered themselves to the floor in a deep obeisance to the two Delphic figures. The cake was cut with a sweeping, surgical gesture. Then the disembodied voice called for more girls. They arose from their tables and glided up towards the cake. Most of them were in white, but one wore a pair of red gloves, another had pinned a red rose at her thigh, and a few were not in white at all.

"Last year's Virgins?" asked Candidus.

"So it seems."

All took pieces of the cake, and conveyed them back to the tables, where with a reverent gesture they offered them to their parents—an act of symbolism which Candidus declared to be somewhat unusual. Then, in obedience to the disembodied voice, the maids floated away up to the gallery to receive gifts. The empty floor remained strewn with fragments of the cake, like offerings after a sacrifice. The waiters fell upon them eagerly.

"Doubtless," remarked Candidus, "they will take them home and offer them to their wives, as emblems of fertility."

The maids returned, each bearing a neat, rectangular package, with a false rose attached to it.

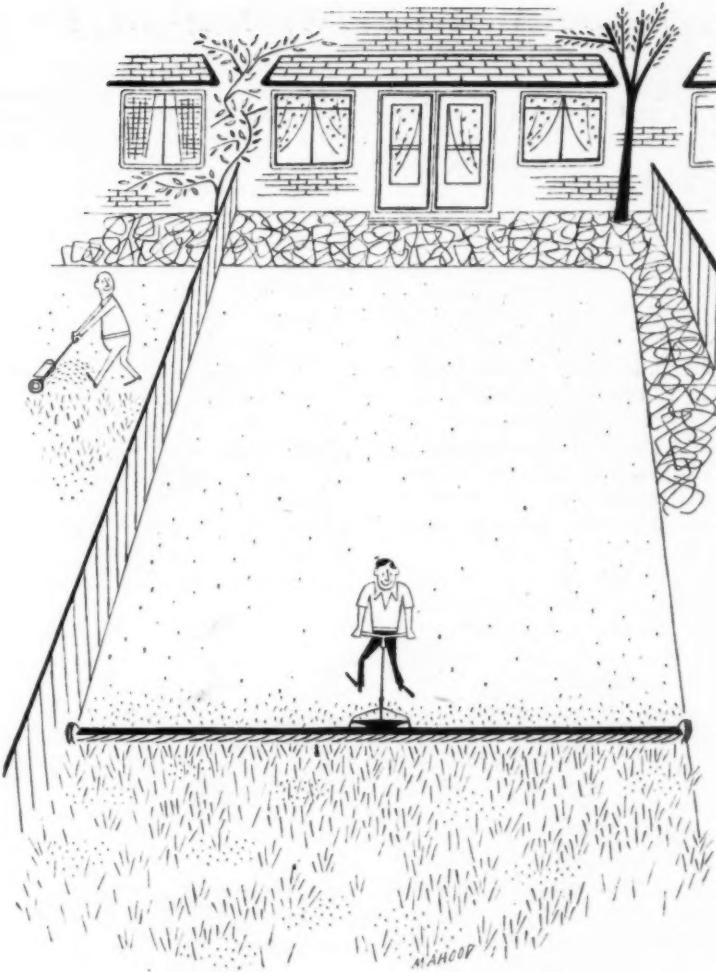
"Packets of tissue handkerchiefs for the Virgins? Most practical," said Candidus.

"We shall see." I explained that the last time I witnessed this ritual each girl was given a brooch inscribed "For Motherhood" and representing a stork which carried a baby. But there had been a war since then, and such superstitions were no longer current among the educated classes. It would be interesting to see what they received this time. It proved to be a lipstick, with "quick-change refills" from Red Coral to Cherry or Gay Crimson.

"Here then you paint your virgins?"

"So it seems."

All around us there was a joyous,



quick-change enamelling of girlish lips. The band struck up, and the dancing began once more. Candidus regarded the dancers with interest. I pointed out to him a Duke, who danced with his Duchess, clasping her closely in his arms.

"He has his ear to her forehead," observed Candidus, "as though listening for something."

"His cheek to her cheek. It is one of our customs."

Presently his attention was caught by a petal-like girl, cloudily enveloped in white, with red coral lips. He followed her around the floor with his eyes, then lost sight of her. A little later she reappeared, her lips gay crimson. At his request I introduced them. She promised him the next dance. He bore her off, cherry-lipped, placing his ear to her forehead. I left them together.

Next morning I asked him "Did you stay late at the ball?"

"No. That beautiful Virgin you introduced me to, she took me away to a night-club. It was very dark there. We danced. Then I took her home. Her name is Cunegonda. A beautiful name."

In response to my questions he was reticent. Then he smiled, a little smugly. "Despite appearances your Virgins seem to be more knowledgeable than ours are."

2 2

#### And About Time Too

"Their love is consummated on a four-poster bed in a pantechnicon during a traffic jam at Hyde Park Corner."

*Book review in Daily Telegraph*

"'Hyde Park Corner,' said the Minister, 'is the most dense traffic spot in London. I intend to press on with this [speed-up] scheme.'"*—News report in Daily Telegraph*

# Cockburn's Aspects of English History

## The Constitution

**N**O deep insight into English history is required for the realization that over a considerable period English men, women and—to a lesser extent—children showed a lively and (to our modern minds) sometimes almost hysterical interest in what they seem to have thought of as The Constitution. Thus Bolger, in his *Diary of a Thoughtful Man's Journey in South Cumberland* (1901), notes that even at that late date he was able to interview a bicycle salesman whose father (a formerly prosperous farmer ruined by the American Civil War and the Alabama Claims) could recall many a pithy tale of the Constitution and remark that in his day "folk did use to bother their heads aboon it."

Earl Attlee, in conversation with a member of a certain organization, was once asked, on a certain memorable occasion, what was his "off-the-record" view of the Constitution.

"I think," said Earl Attlee, "that it helps, or tends to help, to some degree."

"In what sense?" insisted his tactless interlocutor.

"I always say horse sense is common sense" riposted the architect of the Welfare State.

Many critics have argued that the discussions, prolonged over many hundreds of years, as to whether this measure or that of English Government could or could not be deemed "constitutional" were what would nowadays be termed a "waste of time."

The answer is that they would seem a waste of time to us now, to-day, but did not seem so to them, then. It may even be asked whether, in their simple beliefs and assumptions on the subject, they were not—in their admittedly naive way—happier than those who, in our own day, have been brought up to see the Constitution simply and clearly as a charming and thoroughly worthwhile piece of pageantry, having a particular appeal to visitors from overseas.

(It may be noted in passing that whereas on the eve of the Boer War the main influx of Constitution-

conscious students came to England's shores from France and Germany—many of them, regrettably, dissidents, seeking in the British Constitution grounds for criticism of their own—to-day the overwhelming majority is from universities west of the Mississippi and east of the Niger, bringing the keen eye of the pioneer, the sharp view of



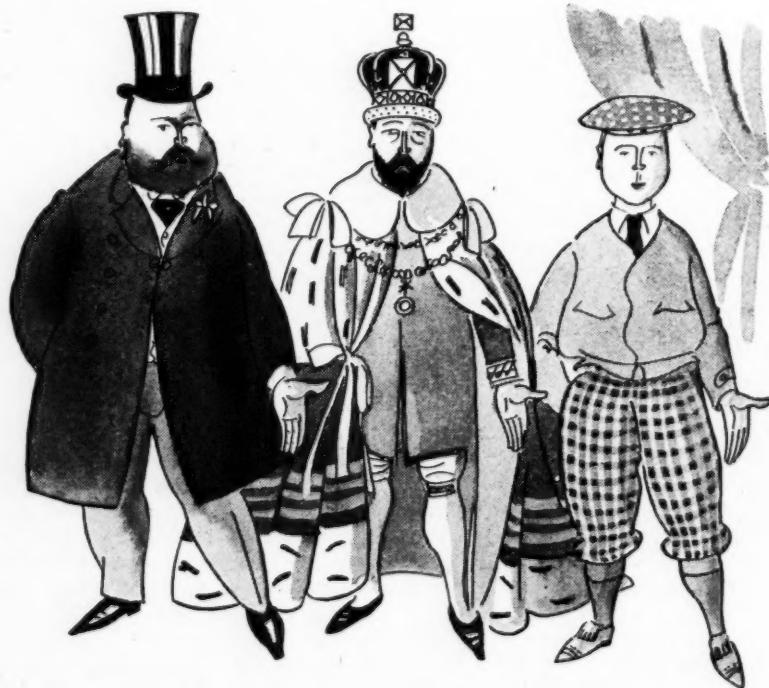
the uninhibited, and the all-too-welcome guerdon of the dollar.)

There was of course a time—most of it before the Scots began to give their full attention to the possibilities of English history—when Englishmen paid less attention to the Constitution than they did to the Second Law of Thermodynamics. And if the matter

was brought to their attention, as it was after the unfortunate reign of King John, they realized—as every political man, woman and civil servant realizes to-day—that whatever the Constitution might be, it could without much difficulty be changed or circumvented by brute force, expert assassination, skilful chicanery, crude chicanery, mixed chicanery, or what the late Lloyd George used to describe, according to a reported remark of the late Lord Oxford, as "the glorious lassitude of desuetude."

In this connection there is an interesting and significant account in Bluntschli's *History of the Relations between Monarchy, People and Constitution in Latter Day England* (published by the Kaiser Wilhelm's Institut in July 1914) of how the late Lord Balfour, at the height of the Home Rule Bill crisis, attempted to report this remark to the late Edward VII.

Lapsing into the vernacular, the monarch replied "Pfui Teufel, these verdammter Welsh," and Lord Balfour—who was well able to combine tact with philosophy, and was in any case deeply concerned with the impending railway



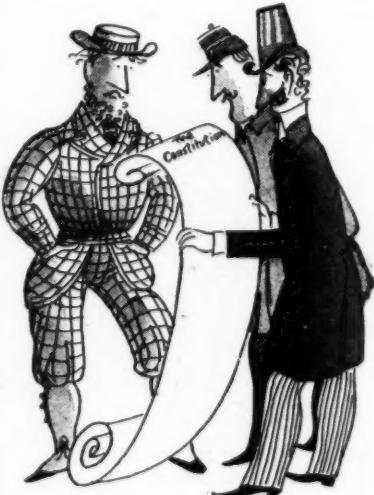
strike which some thought grossly unconstitutional—withdrew in order, later, to repeat the tale to George V, who remarked "What the Devil's the matter with that damned Welshman?"

Thus the precious English quality of continuity was assured. And when Edward VIII, on a famous occasion, commented apropos of Lord Baldwin, "What in hell does that man who makes his money out of Welsh steel, but lives on the English side of the Border, think he's playing at?" he was, as has been too little realized, only seeking to carry on the old tradition.

Those who assume that the long-drawn interest in the Constitution, culminating in the unlucky dispute between Charles I and others, and taking a further turn in its typically quiet, but assured, English course when the English, in 1688, realizing that their traditions, the very heart of their Anglicism, were at stake, assisted a Dutchman to chase a Scotsman down the river, thus giving themselves time to look about and find a German to take over their monarchy, did not do much ultimate good, are almost certainly mistaken.

It gave employment to many, and caused many others, who were merely engaged in plundering a monastery or manor house, in committing rapine on the lower orders or other activities, to understand that they were doing so in favour of, or against, a change in the Constitution.

It was left to the Victorians—cynical, dissolute, and oblivious of the vast forces of history which were building



up under and around them—to knock the final chips out of the foundations of the Constitution.

There had been, a hundred and more years earlier, Voltaire. There had been the French Encyclopædistes in general. They were, as is known, cynical, dissolute, and—as Maidstrom has rightly said—"force-oblivious." The result was the French Revolution and much that that implies.

The Victorians refused to be forewarned. Led by hot-heads like Walter Bagehot, who in 1867 published his work on the *English Constitution*, they set out—consciously or unconsciously—to undermine the faith hitherto firmly rooted in the hearts of men.

Which of these first and finally implanted the idea that the English Constitution was *uncertain*—in other words, that everyone in power could make it up as he went along—is fortunately not known. For a while the English, not realizing the appalling blow that had been dealt to their faith, accepted this notion with equanimity—even boasting of it to foreigners, who came over to England trying to compare the paragraphs of their Constitutions with that of the English and found the task impossible.

"Not written" was the English response to these advances, and very little exchange of opinion could, as a result, be made. And for several years the idea that whereas everyone in France and the United States knew what they had by way of a Constitution,

no one in England had any possibility of knowing any such thing, seemed to English people a subject for actual self-applause.

With the later development of the Civil Service, with the rise of Left-Realism—at one time threatening, until it was balanced by Right-Realism—it became apparent to pensive observers that the Constitution is better served by being presented in the annual pageantry of the Lord Mayor's Show (which had its origin in the days when kings durst scarce show their faces in the crowd of jostling apprentices 'twixt Westminster and the City, as Ogilvie has so trenchantly pointed out) than in any other way.



"Otherwise," as a future Lord Chancellor has said, "it may be necessary to change it, in which case it would hardly be the Constitution as we have all grown to know it."

That, it may be said, is a typical upsummarization of an attitude to a question, and, as such, well worth study by all students of English history.



**I**F Air-Commodore Harvey had had a ride in a Victor, why should not Mr. Beswick have one too? It did turn out that the Air-Commodore had made the thing, which gave him a rather special claim, and Mr. Aubrey Jones did not think it a good plan to "open the door" to too many passengers. But Mr. Gaitskell said that there was no need to "open the door." Members of Parliament could get in "through the usual channels"—of all ways of boarding an aircraft surely the most peculiar. Mr. Heathcoat Amory explained that egg production was now "over the peak of the flush," and after such confessions it was no surprise to hear Mr. Ian Harvey plead that it was "not so simple" to collect Czarist debts off the Bolsheviks. Monday's riot of fun continued throughout question-time on Tuesday. Mr. Stan Awbery would have the Government give an extra grant to all local authorities where more than a certain proportion of electors voted at election-time. Mr. Robert Mellish is fighting a gallant fight for better pay for Members,

and it is about time that he won, but if we are to have payment of voters as well as payment of Members it is indeed hard to know where it will end. Mr. Eric Fletcher wanted Temple Bar brought back to London. But Temple Bar, alas, pleaded the Minister of Works, does not belong to him. It belongs, in fact, to Mr. Ian Gilmour, the Editor of *The Spectator*, and one trembles to think what heads might be called upon to adorn it if he should re-erect it *in situ*.

"*Forsitan et nostrum nomen miscebitur istis*," the Attorney-General might whisper to the Minister of Works

A Committee of Privy Councillors under Lord Attlee has been set up to teach Cabinet Ministers how to work to rule. Mr. Shinwell, imagining apparently but quite inaccurately that

body else was bothered about the young hopefuls specializing too much, and Lord Hailsham—there is no accounting for tastes—found it "an enjoyable debate." But Lord Chorley was concerned with quite a different matter—to wit, the alarming intrusion of security police spies into university life, where they compelled poor harmless duns to go and rifle their colleagues' desks to find out if they were Communists. On this Lord Hailsham made no reply, so, as the American said about the Archbishop of Canterbury, "We shall never know now."

On Thursday Mr. Macmillan in the Commons made a most gracious *amende honorable* to Admiral North, and Dame Irene Ward demanded new flowers on the Terrace in place of the present ones which are dead. In the Lords there was being enacted a play which sounded a little like something out of Anstey. Indeed it was not merely *Vice Versa* but, if the phrase may be permitted, *Vicibus Versis*. Bultitude was piled upon Bultitude. It was funny enough to see Lord Salisbury going back to school and up before the Headmaster. It was funnier still to see him up before Lord Hailsham. It is not so very long since in the television debates Lord Salisbury was telling Lord Hailsham that his views were "very unusual for a Conservative," and last October, whatever protests there may have been behind the closed doors of the Cabinet, in public it was Lord Salisbury who



*The Chairman of the Committee to ease the strain on Cabinet Ministers shows the way to do so.*



"Sweet nothings" scribbled on the walls of Parliament are to be cleaned off by the Office of Works.

was lecturing us on the moral that to have gone on in Suez would have been indefensible, and Lord Hailsham who at any rate seemed to hint at more adventurous policies. Now it is Lord Hailsham who is the statesmanlike realist, Lord Salisbury who is the adventurer.

The role did not really suit him. Everyone of every opinion was indeed moved by his peroration in which he spoke of his many years' service in the House, and it is true that he gave a much clearer answer than did the Suez rebels in the Commons to the question, What should the Government have done? They should, said Lord Salisbury, have declared an Anglo-French boycott of the Canal. Had they done so, by showing consistency they would, he believed, have regained the

moral leadership of the world and would, he argued, have rallied a team to their support. He did not make a very strong case for it. It was assertion rather than argument. Consistency is indeed a virtue, but in certain circumstances a virtue of little minds. When you have proclaimed an objective there is indeed something to be said for achieving it, but by our past breach of our obligations we have forfeited any chance of wresting moral leadership out of this confusion. It was a curiosity that in all this talk about our moral position in the Middle East no speaker thought fit to refer to what our one true friend in the Middle East, Nuri-es-Said, thought of the way that we behaved last October. Lord Salisbury said that the Government was not to blame for the present catastrophe. The fault lay with United Nations, the

"... we are getting in the industry slavery in a very real sense of the word."—Mr. J. P. W. Mallalieu

United States, the Russians, the Socialists. It is not a sensible argument. It is the business of a Government to live in a real world and to foresee the easily foreseeable reactions of other people. It is idle for them to say that it was not their fault that there was not a heat-wave on Christmas Day.

Lord Home for the most part contented himself with the repetition of the familiar and unsupported case that the Government in October prevented a great Russian war. That part of his speech was only interesting for his assertion that he was not "defending every aspect of our intervention." Which are the parts of the cargo that have now been officially jettisoned? On Lord Salisbury's point Lord Home contented himself with asking whether Lord Salisbury really believed it. He did not deal with the question whether there was any chance that an Anglo-French boycott would have rallied other Powers. Lord Hailsham, on the other hand, was quite definite that it would not—that such a policy, far from rallying the Powers, would have set world opinion against us, and no one who is alive in the real world can doubt that he was right. Though Lord Hailsham, a kindlier Doctor Grimstone, solicitous of Mr. Bultitude's nether extremities, was careful not offensively to dot his *is* and cross his *ts*, his argument amounted to a flat contradiction of Lord Salisbury's thesis.

CHRISTOPHER HOLLIS

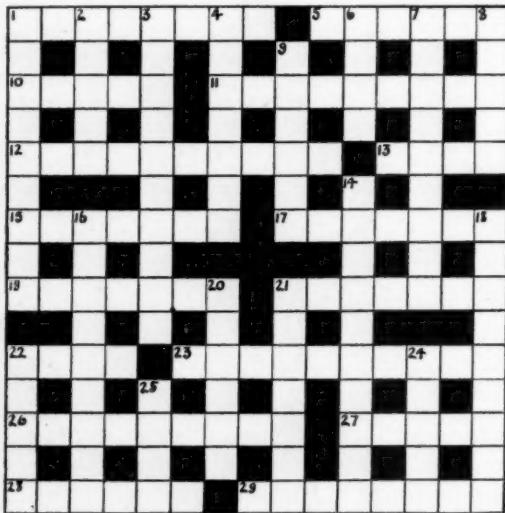




## Cricket Crossword

### ACROSS

- This in the field may involve this from the side. (8)
- Bowler's blunder. (2, 4)
- Such wickets help the bowler's average. (5)
- Cork bride? Far from it; a man from Northamptonshire (9)
- Its new side, in better shape, will be seen in the field this week. (4, 6)
- The catcher's sound of approval when a sitter has been caught. (4)



- What the partner does who calls off a run in mid-pitch. (7)
- When a famous footballer and cricketer are introduced there's no need to treat the ceremony thus. (5, 2)
- No bowler could be put on to do a hat-trick with this. (7)
- This business, but not this game, is 4 down. (7)
- Third man in; played for Surrey. (4)
- Where Test players keep their weather eye open. (10)
- Jessop was the most famous of them. (9)
- Where 12 across had to cross over. (5)
- Far from a century, still, it's a score. (6)
- S.o.b. asset, possibly, for a timid batsman facing a scorcher. (8)

### DOWN

- More highly valued wicket-keeper than his name suggests. (9)
- Stanzas in the poetry of cricket. (5)
- Short expedition by a batsman. (7, 3)
- Bodyline as practised by Larwood was this business. (7)
- Petty paces in which the score creeps. (4)
- I'm 'Indu lad? Utterly wrong, though certainly a good man from the East. (9)
- "Spins like a fretful midge," his victims think. (5)
- This bowler has a steady influence on 12 across. (6)
- My noble era, *mutatis mutandis*, sees the creation of the G.H.Q. of the game. (10)
- This batsman must look after himself. (6, 3)
- Terms of free offer, but not of cricket boots. (2, 7)
- Three mythologically; one was a legend in this game. (6)
- Bowler sometimes does batsman, of being l.b.w. (7)
- They run faster here in Surrey than at the Oval. (5)
- There's often a grand slam at bridge here. (5)
- Foozled cuts are a sure sign of the rabbit. (4)

*Solution next week.*



### Pensions Gift Horse

ON the whole the Press has been rather kind to the Labour Party's policy document "National Superannuation," better known perhaps as the "Retire on Half-pay Scheme." A few mildly cynical quips, a column or two of higher criticism, and that is all: none of the derisory laughter and vituperative buckshot that Socialist planning of this magnitude and dewy-eyed optimism seems to deserve.

Twenty years ago the scheme would have been howled down on sight for a score of reasons—because it is compulsory, because it looks so far ahead (the authors claim that the pensions fund will still be solvent by the year 2030), that it is quite unrealistic, because it will knock private insurance business, because it saddles industry with higher taxation and heavy contributions to the fund, because it is inflationary, because it puts vast sums of the taxpayers' money in the hands of inexpert and probably misguided investment bureaucrats, because the scheme is part and parcel of the Left's cradle-to-grave policy of mollycoddle, because it stifles initiative, enterprise and the spirit of adventure, and so on. Yes, twenty years ago it would have been called a Communist plot.

But in 1957 Labour's plans for National Superannuation constitute a "statesmanlike document." *The Financial Times* says "it is a great deal better than might have been expected . . . it has been devised in cautious and conservative economic terms . . . it offers the prospect of a substantial increase in national savings over the next twenty years, which would help to finance the economic expansion upon which any adequate pension scheme must be based." And *The Economist*, more sceptical of the plan than other responsible papers, says "Although there are features of the Labour scheme that

would not be adopted by the prudent, there may be a case for state encouragement of a model 'national superannuation scheme.'"

The Press's reluctance to look this particular gift-horse in the mouth is understandable. Pensions have become a dominant theme in party politics, and an ageing population has suddenly become enormously interested in the subject. By blasting Labour's scheme with we-can't-afford-it, airy-fairy-idealistic-nonsense lines of argument the papers could easily build up a lot of genuine and lasting hostility among their readers.

There is also the fact that the Conservatives are known to be hatching their own pensions plan for early delivery; and any newspaper would look pretty silly if after drubbing the Socialist dream it had to pat a very similar Tory afflatus warmly on the back. In my view the twoschemes will probably be as alike as two Ps and Qs in a pod.

I am quite certain that either this or the next government will rush a vast, comprehensive, contributory, differentiated pensions plan into the Statute Book. And I am equally certain that this plan, whatever its shape, will prove inflationary. Labour is budgeting for contributions to the fund of five per cent (of each employee's earnings) from the employer, three per cent from the employee himself and two per cent from the State, and there is no reason to hope that this would not involve the country in higher costs, higher prices, reduced bargaining power in the export markets, new wage demands (it is net spendable income that the employed worker worries about—not his investments in insurance), and higher taxes.

I am alarmed too by the prospect of bureaucrats administering the vast funds of the superannuation scheme. Who knows to what use the money would be put? What happened to the Road Fund?

MAMMON



### Mass-produced Poultry

THE Englishman's diet of beef, mutton and pork is about to be changed. Within a few years it will be beef, mutton, pork and chicken. According to the latest survey of feeding habits people in the United States consume over ten times as many fowls as we do. It's not that we don't enjoy eating poultry; the reason for our abstinence is that we do enjoy it. Consequently our puritan background has operated and made us restrict our indulgence in roast poultry to Christmas or the occasional family orgy. Another factor, of course, is that poultry has always been comparatively expensive.

That state of affairs is to be changed. A new method has been developed in the rearing of cockerels which will do for chicken what the Dutch piggery did for the production of bacon, or the deep litter house achieved in the yield of eggs—which we are now exporting. We may soon be exporting both bacon and poultry too. What was once the farmer's wife's sideline is about to

become an industry. New buildings, or rather units as they are called, are being constructed, each of which houses ten thousand cockerels. The birds go into these batteries straight from the incubators. They are fed on specially prepared meal, which includes antidotes to B.W.D. and other poultry diseases. After ten weeks of intensive feeding the whole batch is killed, when the weight then averages about  $3\frac{1}{2}$  lb. A central packing station collects the birds, and they eventually find their way to the frozen food market in a frill of Cellophane, reaching the table as *demi-poussin* or fried Maryland. This innovation not only increases the amount of poultry, it is an improvement on the tough old cocks and scraggy boiling fowls which, with their poultice of bread sauce, used to be placed before us.

To my palate it's a pity if this new method of raising poultry isn't extended to other kinds of birds. At its best, and it seldom reaches that stage, chicken is mere nursery food or invalid diet; it is the spud of the feathered world. Even duck is better. But what is needed is an improvement in quality, not a mere increase in quantity. By which I mean couldn't some of these rearing units be filled with woodcock, snipe, partridge or quail? When the demand for these delicacies had been satisfied, one or two could be stocked with jackdaws. No bird tastes better if roasted on wood ash, and served by a girl with bare feet.

RONALD DUNCAN



## BOOKING OFFICE

### Dantan's Inferno

**Figures of Fun.** Janet Seligman: *The Caricature - Statuettes of Jeanne-Pierre Dantan*. Oxford University Press, 21/-

**C**ARICATURE is not an art that can really ever be said to have flourished abundantly in this country. There have been brilliant by-products, but Max Beerbohm is the only great exponent of modern times who comes immediately to mind; and even Max Beerbohm is concerned chiefly with intellectual rather than physical comment. I distinguish, naturally, between caricatures and cartoons, the latter opening up a completely different field. The *Vanity Fair* series by "Ape" and "Spy," first-rate in their way, although drawn with great restraint, are excellent examples of the English approach to caricature, a genre further—and, if one may say so, often admirably—explored from time to time by the artists of *Punch*.

The essence of caricature is, of course, to seize on physical peculiarities, and exaggerate them in such a way that a joke is made about a man's body—not his clothes, or his political opinions, or even his personality, but his *body*: his arms and legs and nose and head.

At this point of my exposé of the art of caricature one faction will immediately point out that the English are too kind, and have too much good taste, to make fun of peoples' physical defects; while another will insist that the English are too prudish and too lacking in that kind of graphic skill. There is perhaps something to be said for both views; but I suggest that the chief reason is that we are, in this country, in some way less aware of physical characteristics, in short, not at home with "the body" like the Latins, or even the Central Europeans.

Anyway, caricature takes its name from Italy, where its popularity can be seen all the time, not only in drawings in newspapers or advertisements but plastically, from Pompeian excavations

to Capo di Monte china. It is with this plastic form of caricature that we are here concerned: caricature in its purest form, in which almost all the emphasis is upon the outstanding physical characteristics of the subject.

Jeanne-Pierre Dantan (1800-1869), although now largely forgotten, was regarded in his day as one of the greatest exponents of this art who has ever lived.



He came from a Protestant Norman family with a tradition of craftsmanship. Together with his caricature statuettes, which are as a rule about nine inches high, he also executed "serious" sculpture of no great interest. The Musée Carnavalet in Paris possesses the greatest collection of his comic works, of which his statuette of Paganini is perhaps the best known in this country. It may sometimes be seen in the window of music shops, almost frightening in its vitality and physiological detail.

For some reason musicians are particularly popular subjects for miniature sculpture, and to this day small busts of Beethoven and other famous composers are to be seen exposed for sale. It is therefore appropriate that Dantan should have executed figures of Berlioz, Rossini, Meyerbeer, Strauss and a host of lesser known musicians and singers. Balzac, Dumas *père* and

Victor Hugo were also among his victims.

He paid several visits to England and made statuettes of William IV, Wellington, Brougham, and a number of other noblemen and men about town. Cantankerous and eccentric himself, he would not necessarily caricature individuals on request; for it soon became known that there was no better advertisement for any public figure than to be a model for Dantan.

Miss Janet Seligman gives an excellent account of him, although, considering his contemporary fame and the obvious oddness of his own character, comparatively little is known about his personal life. He was, however, a great collector of *curiosa*, and some of his statuettes were made only for the eyes of friends. His style shows the influence of Daumier, though in no slavish fashion, the statuettes existing entirely in their own right.

It is an excellent thing that this book should have been written about him. It includes photographs of twenty of his works. One cannot help wondering whether a market still exists for public figures caricatured in this manner. During the war there were statuettes of Sir Winston Churchill to be seen. There is perhaps an opening for some enterprising comic artist to try his hand at such sculpture. They might be sold at places like airports as souvenirs for foreign visitors. After the lapse of nearly a century it is an opportunity for some artist to make a name in a new medium.

ANTHONY POWELL

## Character Work

**The Sandcastle.** Iris Murdoch. Chatto and Windus, 15/-

Having herself fled the Enchanter and jettisoned all early influences, Miss Murdoch has produced a truly original work whose impact depends no longer upon the invention of farcical and fantastic incident for its own sake, but upon the individual treatment of realistic characters and setting: the unexpected,

yet wholly credible, reactions of her protagonists to the various crises, both comic and terrible, with which they are confronted. No short review can do justice to the flexibility of mood and style; the sympathetic yet unsentimental portrayals of both adolescence and old age; the technical range and verbal skill by which atmosphere is vividly evoked and humour blended with emotion—as when the middle-aged henpecked housemaster first realizes his passion for a girl half his age, or the unbearably suspenseful scenes when the boys are trapped climbing the school tower immediately after a hilarious lantern-slide lecture.

J. M.R.

**Invasion 1940.** Peter Fleming. *Hart-Davis, 25/-*

Colonel Fleming has covered everything—the German invasion plan, the British defence scheme, the world-wide background, the atmosphere at home, the espionage real and fancied, the jokes, the rumours; and a very thorough, and thoroughly readable, job he has made of it. Because his special talent is for the playing-down of heroics, posterity may feel that Britain's efforts at self-defence in 1940 were slightly ludicrous, and it would be a pity if posterity did feel this, for however ludicrous the pikes and the Spanish veterans and the lists of wheelbarrows in Painswick may now seem, they seemed important enough then.

At any rate posterity's picture of the period will be minutely detailed; in his determination to preserve the nineteenth-forties for history Colonel Fleming has even gone to the length of inserting among his countless footnotes such observations as "Fourth Leaders [in *The Times*] have normally a more frivolous character than those which precede them on the leader page."

B. A. Y.

**Matthew Prior.** R. W. Ketton-Cremer. *Cambridge University Press, 3/6*

Matthew Prior (1664-1721) should be better known, both for his poetry and for his work as a diplomatist. Few persons in this country's history would be capable of negotiating the Treaty of Utrecht and also of writing *Jinny the Just* or *My Noble, Lovely, Little Peggy*. Mr. R. W. Ketton-Cremer (in this Rede Lecture for 1957) provides an admirable memorial for his subject. May we hope this is only a prelude to a full length biography. Prior started life as a pot-boy. He sets a high standard for Foreign Office candidates from unconventional backgrounds.

A. P.

**Doctor Rabelais.** D. B. Wyndham Lewis. *Sheed and Ward, 21/-*

This is at severe pains to prove that though a lapsed monk and a violent traducer of his Church, Rabelais remained sound in essential doctrine and died a good penitent—the last a hearsay assumption which may or may not be true. His

virulent assault on the mendicant orders is charmingly described as "just a carefree romp." Mr. Wyndham Lewis is continually having at the dons for arid arrogance, but in the lengthy and endlessly erudite arguments in which his special case is put forward there is a notable absence of Christian humility, and of course "the whole roaring chaos of Protestantism" is not forgotten.

A pity, for polemics aside this is an acute and sensible study of the man and writer, delivered with a wit and gusto proper to its subject. Mr. Wyndham Lewis will have none of the idea that Rabelais was a great Renaissance intellectual, but is wisely content to think of him as a master of prose and "gorgeous entertainment."

E. O. D. K.

**Visitations.** Louis MacNeice. *Faber, 10/6*

In his latest collection Mr. Louis MacNeice resembles rather the libertine of one of his earlier poems who in youth "ran through women like a child through growing hay," but in middle age merely goes through the accustomed gestures, inwardly crying out: "O leave me easy, leave me alone." Technical skill remains, with extreme facility, and they are responsible for one or two delightful poems—the ingenious "Time for a Smoke" and the beautifully composed "The Burnt Bridge" are two of them. But most of the poems here are stale, repetitions of what the poet has done, and done better, before. In the 'thirties Mr. MacNeice's poems were remarkable for their sharp observation of life's shapes and colours rather than for depth and subtlety of thought. Now, many years on from the 'thirties, his apprehension of the visible world has naturally lost something in sharpness, and his philosophy has gained nothing in depth. Hedonism plus a vague sense that life is sad but wonderful may at a pinch serve a poet in youth, but hardly in middle age.

J. S.

**The Gilded Fly.** Hamilton Macallister. *Hamish Hamilton, 13/6*

Mr. Hamilton Macallister has written one of the funniest novels I have read for a long time. It describes the life of a master at a grammar school in the Midlands. This puts it into a definite tradition of writing, and one that is to be judged by high standards. *Mr. Perrin and Mr. Traill* might be regarded as representing one end of that tradition, *Decline and Fall* the other. Mr. Macallister comes through with flying colours. He can write, and *The Gilded Fly* (a faintly inappropriate title, because, as novels go, there is comparatively little lechering) is an example of a book without formal plot which, at the same time, sticks to the point and never slackens from start to finish. The hero, George Pent, arrives at the school when the headmaster ("the Brigadier") is away in Africa, doing some extraneous job, since he is a man of many interests. As a result discipline has gone down hill.

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"How can we argue fairly if you keep on taking tranquillizers?"

Pent's experiences staying as a lodger with a colleague are very enjoyable. Strongly recommended to those who like this sort of novel.

A. P.

**The Body's Imperfection.** L. A. G. Strong. *Methuen, 18/-*

In one of the longer pieces of L.A.G. Strong's collected poems—spanning the years from 1914 to 1956—there is a charm:

"To turn a thousand kisses into bees:  
Kisses of long ago, and yesterday's . . ."

Voices of long ago and yesterday's murmur beneath the cadences of his earlier lines, but as his work matures he secretes honey unmistakably his own. Sometimes he is ironically pointed:

"Prosperity's the test for me:  
Pray God I may be tested."

Sometimes, as in "Northern Light," he is lyrically soaring:

"Thoughts are the clean gulls,  
Flesh cool as a bone.  
The mind is a wave here  
And the heart a stone."

Sometimes he hits off oddities of our proud and angry dust:

"One to keep a proper eye on  
MARS and VENUS everywhere"

he says of "Jane, Who Kept the Grocer's Shop."

You can see his "Paperman" and "Old Dan'l" as figures proper to the companionship of Tom Pearce and his grey mare.

His finest work, of which his epitaph "A Poet" is typical, has the truth of timelessness:

"If we refuse their easy bread  
They give no ration but a stone.  
Here lies lost music, in a head  
That could not live by bread alone."

The bees that sing in those lines flew there from Hymettus.

R. C. S.



## AT THE PLAY

*Be Good, Sweet Maid*  
(BIRMINGHAM REPERTORY)

LAST week at Guildford, in R. C. Sheriff's *The Telescope*, I saw a study of the young criminal (a better phrase, surely, than "juvenile delinquent," a hedge in horrible English) from the boy's angle, and now at the Birmingham Rep I have seen another from the girl's, in *Be Good, Sweet Maid*, a new play by C. E. Webber, commissioned by the Arts Council. In both cases the erring young are products of broken homes, and in both extremely well drawn and acted. In neither does the rest of the play match the force and accuracy of its central portrait.

Mr. Webber's heroine is sixteen, and has been adrift more or less since birth. Her father, a self-made manufacturer, had left her to the mercies of her drunken and profligate mother soon after she was born, and salving a card-index conscience with regular cheques, has taken his efficient secretary as mistress. This arrangement collapses when the girl appears in court, and he agrees to bring her home. Working in his factory she is happy for the first time, but her discovery of the mistress shocks her terribly, and at the suggestion that they should all live together she dashes off in hysterics to her old life. The father and mother meet, and decide to try to make a home for her; by then she is having a baby, and an

ambitious clerk in the factory blackmails his way into marrying the boss's daughter.

There are so many threads in this complex pattern, some irrelevant to the main theme, that several important questions go unanswered. As the girl loathes her mother, and is hardly strait-laced herself, why should she be so horrified at her father taking a mistress of whom she is very fond? He has refused to divorce her mother not from religious conviction but out of a sort of muddled respectability. Are we to think he would have done better to make a clean break at the beginning and look after his daughter, or that he is behaving nobly in his sentimental patching of a union which is obviously hopeless?

Is the girl's marriage with the ruthless clerk supposed to hold a chance of happiness, or is it the disaster it appeared to me? If Mr. Webber has made up his mind on these points he has not passed on his conclusions. As it is, the father is the weakest character, an indeterminate blether who could never have built up a big business. Only outraged gentility awakens his affection for a daughter whom all this time he has abandoned to almost certain degradation; the strength of his paternal qualms comes rather late to be impressive. Geoffrey Taylor plays him too fussily, but he isn't helped by the writing, especially in down-stage soliloquies sometimes stiltedly out of character.

With fewer scenes and fewer people Mr. Webber could have made more of material which, though inherently dramatic, is often dissipated in merely theatrical clashes. But the girl's flat misery and her blossoming are finely imagined; and invalid as I thought the reason for her further agonies, her state of mind is understood with great sympathy. The performance is remarkable in a young actress, Sonia Fraser, of whom we are likely to hear much more. She can quietly project intense feeling, and she catches the fledgling quality in the girl's first happiness which is very touching. Albert Finney, whose honest *Henry V* I admired a few months ago, takes the clerk intelligently. I think it is the play's fault, not his, that at the end we are not sure if he is really a bad hat or only an Arnold Bennett character on the make. Jill Forest gives a good account of the clever, unselfish mistress, and the remainder of the Rep's team proves itself as sound as ever.

After all we have heard of her life the mother might have been a good deal blousier than Nancie Jackson makes her, but apart from this Bernard Hepton's production is sensible and adroit. For the multiple set demanded by the play's somewhat feverish itinerary, full marks indeed to Finlay James.

### Recommended

(Dates in brackets refer to *Punch* reviews)

*The Waltz of the Toreadors* (Criterion—14/3/56) and *The Chalk Garden* (Haymarket—25/4/56) survive long runs as the two best plays in London. The sturdily *avant-garde* should see *Ionesco's The Chairs* (Royal Court—22/5/57).

ERIC KEOWN



[*Be Good, Sweet Maid*

Harry Hicks—ALBERT FINNEY

Brenda Fawcett—SONIA FRASER

## AT THE OPERA

*Aida* (STOLL)

NOTHING mealy-mouthed about the singing. The Radames, Roberto Turrini, turned "Celeste Aida" into an earsplitting harangue and continued more or less like that, as most of the other principals did, for the rest of the night.

It would be untrue to say Mr. Turrini also set the key for the night's acting. What he did initiate was a system of arbitrary motions which did duty for acting. Embarked on tender rising phrases, he would put his head on one side and extend a pleading hand as though trying to sell a watch to somebody in the stalls. In moments of outrage everybody took two steps back, at the risk of colliding with a Nubian dancing boy or a Coptic harp player, and felt for his wallet. Towards the end of "Ritorna Vincitor" the Aida, Simona dell'Argine, extended her arms as people do before a high dive, but, since she wandered off-stage in the same posture, I could only conclude that Signor Remo della Pergola, the producer, meant us to think of Aida

as a sleepwalker. By the Nile scene Miss d'Argine had weeded the hoots out of her voice and was sending big, burnished top notes (one of them memorably flat) to the back of the gallery.

The Triumph scene had people tittering and nudging. The public square in Thebes was fringed, feathered and overcrowded, with muscular male dancers running their elbows into chorus singers' ribs, Ethiopian captives unable to find a square yard of dust to bite, and garlanded slave girls getting in everybody's hair. Four barelegged young men in soutaines and recorders' wigs carried Amneris on in a litter and all but rolled her off it; then returned, presumably, to quarter-sessions duty.

Lucia Daniela, the Amneris, is small, buxom, highly vitalized and young. Her voice actually and her style potentially are in the great line. It was possible to observe her style breaking out of its chrysalis as the performance went on. Her crucial phrases at the opening of the boudoir scene were ill-considered and shapeless. By the end of the same scene the mature authority and beauty of her line were startling.

The one really consistent performance of the night was Vincenzo Bellezza's at the rostrum. His beat, a pleasure to watch, that of a man who loves his Verdi with uncommon affection and in uncommon detail.

CHARLES REID



## AT THE PICTURES

*The Search for Bridey Murphy*  
*Law of the Streets*

AT a guess I would say that there will be no discussion at all of *The Search for Bridey Murphy* (Director: Noel Langley), either in print or in conversation, that does not very soon become an argument or a piece of special pleading about the facts. People believe or disbelieve in Bridey Murphy because they are temperamentally inclined to do so; even the comparative few who did not have a rough idea of the story already will reach their conclusion about its truth (or rather, its explanation) not from the way this film presents it but because they can or can not conceive of the possibility of reincarnation. Most of us who did know something about the story will simply be confirmed in our existing opinions, and will tend to approve or disapprove the film merely according to whether it agrees or disagrees with them.

This is a pity, because it is a well-made film, well acted and continuously interesting—even though it is an essentially literary story (the whole point of it is made in words and could not be made otherwise) and not a true subject for the cinema anyway. It deserves to be judged apart from its argument. But undeniably it does, as a version of Morey Bernstein's book, with all the usual apparatus of a film involving real people and the incidents in which they took part—undeniably it does set out to convince



*(The Search for Bridey Murphy)*

Ruth Simmons }  
Bridey Murphy } TERESA WRIGHT

Morey Bernstein—LOUIS HAYWARD

and convert. It does convince, that this is what happened; it is done with admirable quiet authenticity. It does not convert anybody one way or the other, because, as I have said, nothing—short of brain-washing—could.

Louis Hayward appears as Morey Bernstein himself, and the film opens with him in front of some labelled scenery flats, smiling into the eye of the camera and telling us what we are to see. He walks a few yards and is in a reconstruction of the original drawing-room where, at an evening party, he watched—at first derisively—the routine of an amateur hypnotist, and later, with growing fascination, became one himself. From then on the picture is largely a series of scenes showing Ruth Simmons (Teresa Wright) lying on a couch in a hypnotic trance, answering his eager questions—and it seems that here the actual tape-recordings of the original Ruth Simmons's answers are reproduced.

Responding to his ardent lead, she remembers that she was once Bridey Murphy, born in 1796 in Cork . . . and we get her life in silent flashback, the scenes being acted while the gentle voice with a touch of Irish accent describes them. All this, of course, is a visual begging of the question, and the weakest part of the film. But the scenes in which the process of hypnotism is actually shown, the worry of Ruth's husband, the disapproval of her doctor, and the final scene of suspense when it seems doubtful whether she can be brought out of her trance at all—these are powerfully effective.

*Law of the Streets*, or *La Loi des Rues* (Director: Ralph Habib) is quite a good,

though conventional, crime story. Goodness knows we have seen before the smooth ruthless master-mind villain challenged and in the end defeated by the young hero who has been living on the edge of the law but means, after the fade-out, to live respectably within it. But here this theme is decorated with much good detail, which freshens it considerably. Apart from the expected scenes in bars and so forth, and the "types" (it sounds better if you pronounce it in French)—which include a good comic dog-thief who goes to work with a pair of scissors, surreptitiously snapping leads—there is a pleasant young-love situation, beginning with an excellently-done scene in a dance-hall. The stars are the villain and his mistress, but the memorable characters are the young lovers (Jean-Louis Trintignant and Josette Arno) and the hero's friend, Jean Gaven.

\* \* \* \* \*

**Survey**  
(Dates in brackets refer to *Punch* reviews)

The most satisfying programme in London is the Academy's, where the Italian documentary *The Lost Continent* (24/4/57) is partnered by the beautifully done, also Italian, schoolboy story *Friends for Life*. Another good pair of a more obvious kind is the British war episode *The Steel Bayonet* (22/5/57) and the comedy about Hollywood, *The Fuzzy Pink Nightgown*. *Boy on a Dolphin* (22/5/57), hokum but lovely to look at, continues.

By far the best release is *Funny Face* (8/5/57), a splendidly enjoyable musical. *Drango* is a stern post-Civil-War drama with good points.

RICHARD MALLETT



## ON THE AIR

Poor Marx

I WONDER what the great men of the Lunar Society, the pioneers, presumably basking in the Elysian Fields, would make of the Home Services symposium "Has Communism Failed?" Somehow I don't think they would approve of this tentative, skirting flirtation with the subject, the flowery mock-debate, the prepared titters and the figures of speech projecting above the sea of laboured small-talk like the hands of drowning men.

The Fifty-One Society came a real cropper with this programme, and I can only assume that the members were led astray and into the abyss by the devious tactics of the chief speaker, James Klugmann, head of the C.P.'s Central Education and Propaganda Department. The matter under discussion should have been intensely interesting. I hoped to hear something to my advantage about the economic credo of Marxism and the subsequent Communist twists of fate that have converted Russia and China into world banks of real capitalist dogma. I hoped to hear something about the Marxist time-table, the promised seven ages of economic man and the final freedom of the proletariat. Not a word.

Mr. Klugmann confused Marxism with Communism from the outset and carefully avoided any idea of disputation more lofty than the soap-box, and his audience, I regret to say, allowed him to get away with it. A pity this, because the transactions of learned scientific and philosophical societies usually make admirable listening, and one weak offering such as this can decimate the audience.



EDWARD R. MURROW

[Burma in the Modern World]

Edward R. Murrow, Fred Friendly and the Columbia Broadcasting System gave the B.B.C. and the I.T.A. another useful lesson in documentation with their "See It Now" programme "Burma in the Modern World." The lesson quite simply is this—that to pack forty-five minutes with interesting informative material the producers need enough film and hard fact to run for five hours. £ s. d. is the great dictator.

This programme, made in the 2,500th year of Buddha's Enlightenment, gave a wonderful potted picture of Burma's social, economic, cultural, political and religious life. As always with Murrow's analyses the story was told in a logical pattern of concentric circles. First the global facts of Burma's position, then her geography and vital statistics, then her economy, social structure, hopes and plans, and finally the hard core of mysticism (to Western minds) which is Buddhism.

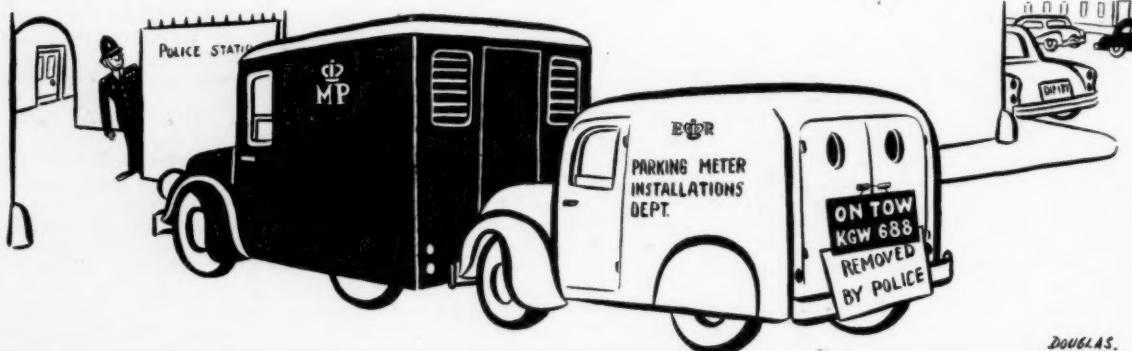
In this admirable programme there was only one false note, a lecture given in English to a group of education-hungry adults. The platitudes were too carefully arranged to carry conviction. The blame and praise for Britain was so neatly balanced that C.B.S. must surely have had the British market and British susceptibilities in mind during production. We want to know what America thinks, not what it thinks the British would like it to think.

Two more programmes of merit were the Outside Broadcast Unit's "This Is Your Royal Air Force," introduced by Sir Dermot Boyle and compèred by Raymond Baxter, and the play *Quartet* by Cedric Wallis. The R.A.F. show was a ramshackle affair

stuffed with fine pictures, live and filmed, and a lot of common sense, but inevitably, perhaps, the review lacked structure and orderly sequence. Activity over the air-fields, over the sea and in the research warrens was brisk and exciting, a sort of "wizard prang."

*Quartet* is not a particularly satisfactory play—it has far too many loose ends and interloping impossibilities to be credible—but it is original and its dialogue is infinitely more sensitive and stirring than that of the conventional Sunday-Night Theatre production. Sebastian Shaw, Alan Wheatley, Paul Eddington and Paul Whitsun-Jones played the crazy mixed-up violins, viola and 'cello with rare skill, and the direction and production could hardly have been more effective. I believe that this play could be rewritten to make a minor classic: the texture is so good that the melodramatic injections of near-poverty and foul play seem quite unnecessary.

BERNARD HOLLOWOOD



DOUGLAS.

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